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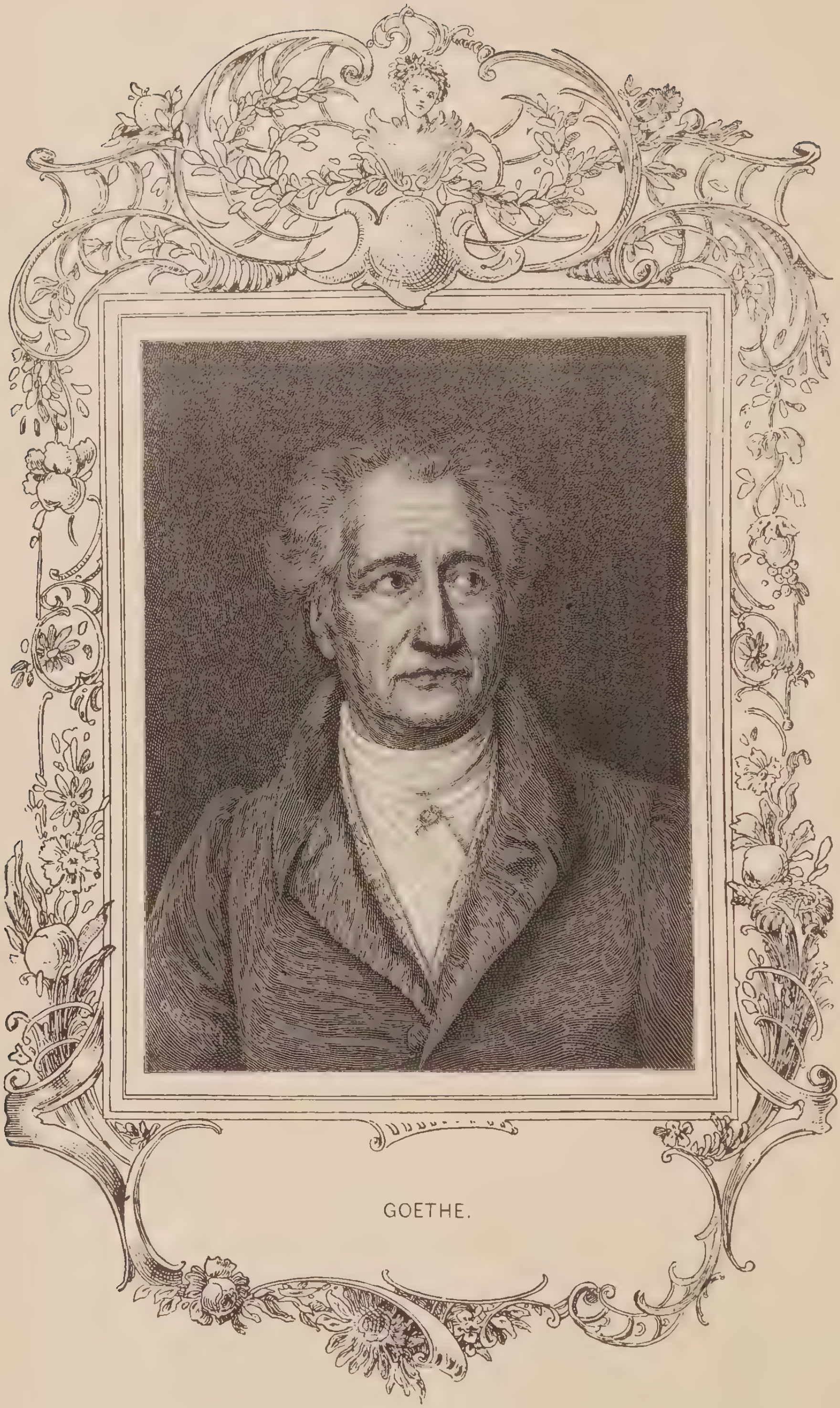

GOETHE.

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THIRTY VOLUMES

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

VOL. XI

	LIVED	PAGE
JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE	1818–1894	6059

BY CHARLES FREDERICK JOHNSON

The Growth of England's Navy (‹English Seamen in the Sixteenth Century›)
The Death of Colonel Goring (‹Two Chiefs of Dunboy›)
Scientific Method Applied to History (‹Short Studies on Great Subjects›)
The Death of Thomas Becket (same)
Character of Henry VIII. (‹History of England›)
On a Siding at a Railway Station (‹Short Studies on Great Subjects›)

HENRY B. FULLER	1859–	6101

At the Head of the March (‹With the Procession›)

SARAH MARGARET FULLER (Marchioness Ossoli)	1810–1850	6119

George Sand (‹Memoirs›)
Americans Abroad in Europe (‹At Home and Abroad›)
A Character Sketch of Carlyle (‹Memoirs›)

THOMAS FULLER	1608–1661	6129

The King's Children (‹The Worthies of England›)
A Learned Lady (same)
Henry de Essex, Standard-Bearer to Henry II. (same)
The Good Schoolmaster (‹The Holy and Profane State›)
On Books (same)
London (‹The Worthies of England›)
Miscellaneous Sayings

	LIVED	PAGE
Émile Gaboriau	1835–1873	6137
The Impostor and the Banker's Wife: The Robbery ('File No. 113')		
M. Lecoq's System (same)		
Benito Perez Galdós	1845–	6153
BY WILLIAM HENRY BISHOP		
The First Night of a Famous Play ('The Court of Charles IV.')		
Doña Perfecta's Daughter ('Doña Perfecta')		
Above Stairs in a Royal Palace ('La de Bringas')		
Francis Galton	1822–	6174
The Comparative Worth of Different Races ('Hereditary Genius')		
Arne Garborg	1851–	6185
The Conflict of the Creeds ('A Freethinker')		
Hamlin Garland	1860–	6195
A Summer Mood ('Prairie Songs')		
A Storm on Lake Michigan ('Rose of Dutcher's Coolly')		
Elizabeth Stevenson Gaskell	1810–1865	6205
Our Society ('Cranford')		
Visiting (same)		
Théophile Gautier	1811–1872	6221
BY ROBERT SANDERSON		
The Entry of Pharaoh into Thebes ('The Romance of a Mummy')		
From 'The Marsh'		
From 'The Dragon-Fly'		
The Doves		
The Pot of Flowers		
Prayer		
The Poet and the Crowd		
The First Smile of Spring		
The Veterans ('The Old Guard')		

LIVED PAGE

John Gay 1685–1732 6237

The Hare and Many Friends (‹Fables›)
The Sick Man and the Angel (same)
The Juggler (same)
Sweet William's Farewell to Black-Eyed Susan
From ‹What D'ye Call It?›

Emanuel von Geibel 1815–1884 6248

See'st Thou the Sea?
As it will Happen
Gondoliera
The Woodland
Onward
At Last the Daylight Fadeth

Aulus Gellius Second Century A. D. 6253

From ‹Attic Nights›; Origin and Plan of the Book; The Vestal Virgins; The Secrets of the Senate; Plutarch and his Slave; Discussion on One of Solon's Laws; The Nature of Sight; Earliest Libraries; Realistic Acting; The Athlete's End

Gesta Romanorum 6261

Theodosius the Emperoure
Moralite
Ancelmus the Emperour
Moralite
How an Anchoress was Tempted by the Devil

Edward Gibbon 1737–1794 6271

BY W. E. H. LECKY

Zenobia
Foundation of Constantinople
Character of Constantine
Death of Julian
Fall of Rome
Silk
Mahomet's Death and Character
The Alexandrian Library
Final Ruin of Rome

All from the ‹Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire›

	LIVED	PAGE
William Schwenck Gilbert	1836–	6333
Captain Reece The Yarn of the Nancy Bell The Bishop of Rum-ti-foo Gentle Alice Brown The Captain and the Mermaids All from the ‘Bab Ballads’		
Richard Watson Gilder	1844–	6347
Two Songs from ‘The New Day’ “Rose-Dark the Solemn Sunset” The Celestial Passion Non Sine Dolore On the Life Mask of Abraham Lincoln From ‘The Great Remembrance’		
Giuseppe Giusti	1809–1850	6355
Lullaby (‘Gingillino’) The Steam Guillotine		
William Ewart Gladstone	1809–	6359
Macaulay (‘Gleanings of Past Years’)		
Edwin Lawrence Godkin	1831–	6373
The Duty of Criticism in a Democracy (‘Problems of Modern Democracy’)		
Goethe	1749–1832	6385
BY EDWARD DOWDEN		
From ‘Faust,’ Shelley’s Translation Scenes from ‘Faust,’ Bayard Taylor’s Translation Mignon’s Love and Longing (‘Wilhelm Meister’s Apprenticeship’) Wilhelm Meister’s Introduction to Shakespeare (same) Wilhelm Meister’s Analysis of Hamlet (same) The Indenture (same) The Harper’s Songs (same) Mignon’s Song (same) Philina’s Song (same) Prometheus Wanderer’s Night Songs		

GOETHE — *Continued:*

LIVED PAGE

The Elfin-King
From 'The Wanderer's Storm Song'
The Godlike
Solitude
Ergo Bibamus!
Alexis and Dora
Maxims and Reflections
Nature

NIKOLAI VASILIEVITCH GOGOL 1809–1852 6455
BY ISABEL F. HAPGOOD

From 'The Inspector'
Old-Fashioned Gentry ('Mirgorod')

CARLO GOLDONI 1707–1793 6475
BY WILLIAM CRANSTON LAWTON

First Love and Parting ('Memoirs of Carlo Goldoni')
The Origin of Masks in the Italian Comedy (same)
Purists and Pedantry (same)
A Poet's Old Age (same)
The Café

MEÏR AAREN GOLDSCHMIDT 1819–1887 6493
Assar and Mirjam ('Love Stories from Many Countries')

OLIVER GOLDSMITH 1728–1774 6501
BY CHARLES MILLS GAYLEY

The Vicar's Family Become Ambitious ('The Vicar of Wakefield')
New Misfortunes: But Offenses are Easily Pardoned Where There is Love at Bottom (same)
Pictures from 'The Deserted Village'
Contrasted National Types ('The Traveller')

IVAN ALEKSANDROVITCH GONCHARÓF 1812– 6533
BY NATHAN HASKELL DOLE

Oblómof

	LIVED	PAGE
THE BROTHERS DE GONCOURT		6549
Edmond 1822–1896 Jules 1830–1870		
Two Famous Men (‘Journal of the De Goncourts’)		
The Suicide (‘Sister Philomène’)		
The Awakening (‘Renée Mauperin’)		
EDMUND GOSSE	1849–	6565
February in Rome		
Desiderium		
Lying in the Grass		
RUDOLF VON GOTTSCHALL	1823–	6571
Heinrich Heine (‘Portraits and Studies’)		
JOHN GOWER	1325 ?–1408	6579
Petronella (‘Confessio Amantis’)		
ULYSSES S. GRANT	1822–1885	6593
BY HAMLIN GARLAND		
Early Life (‘Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant’)		
Grant’s Courtship (same)		
A Texan Experience (same)		
The Surrender of General Lee (same)		
HENRY GRATTAN	1746–1820	6615
On the Character of Chatham		
Of the Injustice of Disqualification of Catholics (Speech in Parliament)		
On the Downfall of Bonaparte (Speech in Parliament)		
THOMAS GRAY	1716–1771	6623
BY GEORGE PARSONS LATHROP		
Elegy Written in a Country Church-yard		
Ode on the Spring		
On a Distant Prospect of Eton College		
The Bard		

PAGE

The Greek Anthology 6637

BY TALCOTT WILLIAMS

On the Athenian Dead at Platæa (Simonides); On the Lacedæmonian Dead at Platæa (Simonides); On a Sleeping Satyr (Plato); A Poet's Epitaph (Simmias of Thebes); Worship in Spring (Theætetus); Spring on the Coast (Leonidas of Tarentum); A Young Hero's Epitaph (Dioscorides); Love (Posidippus); Sorrow's Barren Grave (Heracleitus); To a Coy Maiden (Asclepiades); The Emptied Quiver (Mnesalcus); the Tale of Troy (Alpheus); Heaven Hath its Stars (Marcus Argentarius); Pan of the Sea-Cliff (Archias); Anacreon's Grave (Antipater of Sidon); Rest at Noon (Meleager); «In the Spring a Young Man's Fancy» (Meleager); Meleager's Own Epitaph (Meleager); Epilogue (Philodemus); Doctor and Divinity (Nicarchus); Love's Immortality (Strato); As the Flowers of the Field (Strato); Summer Sailing (Antiphilus); The Great Mysteries (Crinagoras); To Priapus of the Shore (Mæcius); The Common Lot (Ammianus); «To-morrow, and To-morrow» (Macedonius); The Palace Garden (Arabius); The Young Wife (Julianus Ægyptius); A Nameless Grave (Paulus Silentiarius); Resignation (Joannes Barbucallus); The House of the Righteous (Macedonius); Love's Ferriage (Agathias); On a Fowler (Isidorus). Anonymous: Youth and Riches; The Singing Reed; First Love again Remembered; Slave and Philosopher; Good-by to Childhood; Wishing; Hope and Experience; The Service of God; The Pure in Heart; The Water of Purity; Rose and Thorn; A Life's Wandering

LIST OF PORTRAITS

IN VOL. XI

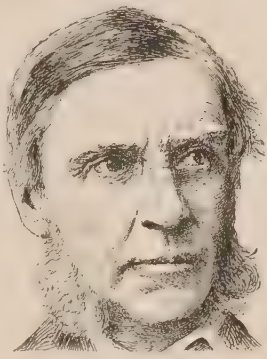
James Anthony Froude	Vignette
Margaret Fuller	Vignette
Thomas Fuller	Vignette
Hamlin Garland	Vignette
Elizabeth Stevenson Gaskell	Vignette
Théophile Gautier	Vignette
John Gay	Vignette
Emanuel von Geibel	Vignette
Edward Gibbon	Full page
William Schwenck Gilbert	Vignette
Richard Watson Gilder	Vignette
William Ewart Gladstone	Full page
Edwin Lawrence Godkin	Vignette
Johann Wolfgang Goethe	Full page
Nikolai Vasilievitch Gogol	Vignette
Carlo Goldoni	Full page
Meïr Aaren Goldschmidt	Vignette
Oliver Goldsmith	Full page
Ivan Aleksandrovitch Goncharóf	Vignette
Edmond de Goncourt	Vignette
Rudolf von Gottschall	Vignette
John Gower	Vignette
Ulysses S. Grant	Full page
Henry Grattan	Vignette
Thomas Gray	Full page

JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE

(1818–1894)

BY CHARLES FREDERICK JOHNSON

James Anthony Froude, English historian and essayist, was born April 23d, 1818, and died October 20th, 1894. His father was a clergyman, and the son was sent to Westminster School and to Oriel College, Oxford. In 1842 he became a fellow of Exeter, and two years later he was ordained a deacon; an office which he did not formally lay down until many years later, although his earliest publications, 'Shadows of the Clouds' and 'Nemesis of Faith,' showed that he had come to hold — and what perhaps is more to the point, dared to express,— views hardly compatible with the character of a docile and unreasoning neophyte.



J. A. Froude

These books were severely censured by the authorities, and cost him — to the great benefit of the world — an appointment he had received of teacher in Tasmania. He resigned his fellowship and took up the profession of letters, writing much for Fraser and the Westminster, and becoming for a short period the editor of the former. His *magnum opus* is his 'History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Defeat of the Spanish Armada,' in twelve volumes, from 1856 to 1870. His other principal publications are —'The English in Ireland in the Eighteenth Century' (1874); 'Cæsar' (1879); 'Bunyan' 1880); 'Thomas Carlyle (first forty years of his life)' (1882); 'Life in London' (1884); 'Short Studies on Great Subjects' (1882, four series); 'The Two Chiefs of Dunboy' (1889); 'The English in the West Indies' (1889); 'The Divorce of Catharine of Aragon' (1892); 'The Life and Letters of Erasmus' (1892); 'English Seamen in the Sixteenth Century' (1892); and 'The Council of Trent.' 'Shadows of the Clouds,' 'The Nemesis of Faith,' and 'The Two Chiefs of Dunboy' are in the form of fiction; and though they — especially the last — contain some charming descriptive passages, and evince some of Froude's power of character sketching, they serve on the whole to prove that he was not a novelist. The fortunes of his group of people are of less absorbing interest to him than questions of social and racial ethics. There is nothing more annoying than to have an essayist stand behind a story-teller and interrupt him from time to time with acute philosophical comments on ultimate causes. The characters of Morty and Sylvester Sullivan are admirably contrasted Celtic types, but both they and the English Colonel Goring are a trifle stagy and stiff in their joints. The murders of the two chiefs, Morty Sullivan and Colonel Goring, are dramatically told; but Froude's deficient sense of humor, at least of that quality of humor which gives a subtle sense of congruity, results in an attempt to combine the elements of the tale and the didactic society in impossible proportions. He is an essayist and historian, not a novel-writer.

Froude stands before the English-reading public prominent in three characteristics: First, as a technical prose artist, in which regard he is entitled to be classed with Ruskin, Newman, and Pater; less enthusiastic and elaborately ornamental than the first, less musically and delicately fallacious than the second, and less self-conscious and phrase-caressing than the third, but carrying a solider burden of thought than all three. Second, as a historian of the modern school, which aims by reading the original records to produce an independent view of historical periods. Third, as the most clear-sighted and broad-minded of those whose position near the centre of the Oxford movement and intimacy with the principal actors gave them an insight into its inner nature.

There can be but one opinion of Froude as a master of English. In some of his early work there are traces of the manner of Macaulay in the succession of short assertive sentences, most of which an ordinary writer would group as limiting clauses about the main assertion. This method gives a false appearance of vigor and definiteness; it makes easy reading by relieving the mind from the necessity of weighing the modifying propositions: but it is entirely unadapted to nice modulations of thought. Froude very soon avoided the vices of Macaulayism, and attained a narrative style which must be regarded as the best in an age which has paid more attention than any other to the art of telling a story. In descriptive historical narrative he is unrivaled, because he is profoundly impressed not only with the dramatic qualities but with the real significance of a scene; unlike Macaulay, to whom the superficial theatrical elements appeal. A reading of Macaulay's description of the trial of Warren Hastings, and Froude's narrative of the killing of Thomas Becket or of the execution of Mary Queen of Scots, will bring out at once Froude's radical superiority in both conception and execution.

This is not the place to debate the question of Froude's historical accuracy, further than to remark that he was an industrious reader of historical documents, and by nature a seeker after the truth. If a profound conviction of the harmfulness of ecclesiasticism colored the light with which he illuminated the records of the past, we must remember that history is at best largely the impressions of historians; and that if it be true that Froude does present one side, it is the side on which the warnings to posterity are most distinctly inscribed. A reading of the controversy between Froude and Freeman in the calmer light of the present leads to the conclusion that the *suppressio veri* with which Froude was charged is not a *suggestio falsi*, but an artistic selection of the characteristic. He felt a certain contempt for the minute and meaningless fidelity to the record, which is not writing history but editing documents. He possessed, too, among his other literary powers, the rare one of being able to individualize the man whose life he studies and of presenting the character so as to be consistent and human. This power fills his history and sketch with rare personalities. Thomas Becket, Henry III., Henry VIII., Queen Catharine, Mary Queen of Scots, and Elizabeth, are more than historical portraits in the ordinary sense: they are conceptions of individuals, vivified by the artistic sense. Whether or not they are true to the originals as reflected in the contemporary documents, they are at least human possibilities, and therefore truer than the distorted automata that lie in state on the pages of some historians. A human character is so exceedingly complex and so delicately balanced with contradictory elements, that it is probable that no two persons ever estimate it exactly alike. Besides, prominent historical personages become in the popular imagination invested with exaggerated attributes, and it is not likely that men will ever agree even as to which of them was the hero and which the villain of the drama. It was to be expected that Froude should be violently assailed by those who accepted a traditional view of Henry VIII. and of Mary. It was inevitable that he should differ from them, because he had more than a view: he had a conception. His historical personages are certainly possibilities, because they are human, and the traditional figures are either monsters or saints; and humanity — at least Teutonic humanity — does not produce unadulterated saints nor unrelieved monsters.

While Froude's historical work has been criticized for lack of minute accuracy in details, his books on Carlyle have been criticized for the opposite fault of quoting too fully and literally; from letters and journals, matter never intended for the public, and of a nature not only to wound living persons but to create an erroneous impression of the writer. The habit of expressing himself in pithy and pungent personalities seems to have been with Carlyle a sort of intellectual exercise, and should not necessarily be taken as an index of morose ill-temper. A very delicate literary tact was necessary to his literary executor, in selecting from the matter put in his hands that which would combine to make a true picture of a crude and powerful genius without making him appear to the ordinary reader a selfish, willful man. Froude's idea of the duty of an editor of contemporary biography seems to have been that it was limited to careful publication of all the available material as *mémoires pour servir.* Such miscellaneous printing may in the end serve truth, but at the time it arouses resentment. It resulted, however, in the production of a book far preferable to the non-committal, evasive, destructively laudatory biography of a public man, of which every year brings a new specimen. It is at least honest, if not tactful.

Froude's early connection with the Oxford movement and his work on the Lives of the Saints first called his attention to the study of historical documents, and to the large amount of fiction with which truth is diluted in them. His further researches among the authorities recently made accessible, for the history of the destruction of the monasteries, impressed on him the fact that an assumption of spiritual authority is as dangerous to those who assume it as to those over whom it is assumed, exactly as physical slavery is in the end as harmful to the masters as it is to the slaves. He saw that ecclesiasticism had been profoundly hostile to morals, and he judged the present by the past till he really believed that the precious fruits of the Reformation would be lost if the ritualists obtained control of the Church. He persuaded himself that under such influence—

«Civilization would ebb, the great moral lights be extinguished,
Over the world would creep an unintelligent darkness
Under which men would be portioned anew 'twixt the priest and the soldier.»

It is perhaps too much to expect of a man of the imaginative temperament of Froude, to whom the abominations of the Church from the twelfth to the sixteenth century were as real as if he had witnessed them, to retain judicial calmness under the vituperation with which he was assailed; but his profound distrust of the mediæval Church certainly does give an air of partisanship to his strictures on its modern ineffectual revival. He forgot that great principles of justice and toleration are now so embodied in law and fixed in the hearts of the English-speaking people that society is protected, and the evils of spiritual tyranny are restricted to the few who are willing to abase their intellects to it; that the corroding evil of conventual life is minimized by healthy outside influences; and that the most advanced modern ritualist would prove too good a Christian to light an *auto da fé.* It was but natural that he should forget this, for he was a strong man in the centre of the conflict, and independence was the core of his being.

This strength of independence is shown by the fact that though young, and profoundly sensitive to the attraction of a character like Newman's, he was from the first able to resist the fascination which that remarkable man exerted over all with whom he came in contact. The pure spiritual nature possesses a mysterious power over young men, so great that they often yield to its counterfeit. Newman was the true priest, and Froude recognized his genius and that his soul was «an adumbration of the Divine.» But he felt instinctively the radical unsoundness of Newman's thought, and «would not follow, though an angel led.» Others fell off for prudential reasons; but Froude was indifferent to these, and obedient to a conviction the strength of which must be estimated by the depth of his feeling for character.

Froude was sometimes criticized for writing history under the influence of personal feeling. It is difficult to see how a readable history can be written except by one who at least takes an interest in the story; but whether capacity for feeling makes a man a less trustworthy historian, depends upon how far this emotional susceptibility is controlled by intellectual insight and just views of the laws under which society develops. That Froude was an absolutely perfect historian, no one would claim: he was too intensely human to be perfect. It is safe to say that the perfect historian will not exist until Shakespeare and Bacon reappear combined in one man. For the great historian must be both scholar and artist. As scholar he must possess, too, both the acquisitive and the organizing intellect. He must both gather facts and interpret them. He must have the artistic sense which selects from the vast mass of fact that which is significant. This power of artistic selection is of course influenced by his unconscious ideals, by his conception of the relative importance of the forces which move mankind, and of the ultimate goal of progress. His philosophy directs his art, and his art interprets in the light of his philosophy.

It may be admitted that Froude possesses a larger share of the artistic than of the philosophic qualities necessary to the great historian. At times his hatred of ecclesiasticism becomes almost a prejudice. In his writings on Irish and colonial questions he evinces the Englishman's love of the right, but sometimes, unfortunately, the Englishman's inability to do justice to other races in points which distinguish them from his own. In some expressions he seems to distrust democracy in much the same unreasoning way in which Mr. Ruskin distrusts machinery. He had imbibed something of Mr. Carlyle's belief in the «strong man»; though he, no more than Carlyle, can show how the strong, just ruler can be produced or selected. But a more serious deficiency in Froude's philosophy arises from his imperfect conception of the method of evolution which governs all organizations, civil and religious, so that they continually throw off short-lived varieties and history becomes a continual giving way of the old order to the new. To fear, as Froude seems to, lest a survival may become a governing type, is as unreasonable as to fear that old men will live forever. Certainly he would have taken a juster, saner view of the English Reformation, had he been convinced that all the collisions between the moral laws and the rebellious wills of men, which are the burden of the years, are in the end obliterated in the slow onward movement of the race; but then perhaps his history would have lost in interest what it might have gained in philosophic breadth and balance. For it cannot be denied that feeling has given his narrative that most valuable quality — life.

The general recognition of Froude's power, and the growing conviction that he was far nearer right than the theological school he so cordially detested, was vindicated by his appointment as Professor of History at Oxford to succeed Freeman, one of the severest critics of his historical fairness. He lived to deliver but three courses of lectures, one of which has been published in that delightful volume 'The Life and Letters of Erasmus.' The others, 'English Seamen of the XVIth Century,' 'Lectures on the Council of Trent,' and the very able paper on Job in 'Short Studies on Great Subjects,' even if taken by themselves, would cause us to form a high opinion of the scope and range of Froude's powers. Those to whom brilliancy is synonymous with unsoundness may perhaps continue to call him merely a «brilliant writer»; but the general verdict will be that his brilliancy is the structural adornment of a well-fitted framework of thought.

Charles F. Johnson

THE GROWTH OF ENGLAND'S NAVY

From 'English Seamen in the Sixteenth Century'

Jean Paul the German poet said that God had given to France the empire of the land, to England the empire of the sea, and to his own country the empire of the air. The world has changed since Jean Paul's days. The wings of France have been clipped: the German Empire has become a solid thing: but England still holds her watery dominion; Britannia does still rule the waves, and in this proud position she has spread the English race over the globe; she is peopling new Englands at the Antipodes; she has made her Queen Empress of India; and is in fact the very considerable phenomenon in the social and political world which all acknowledge her to be. And all this she has achieved in the course of three centuries, entirely in consequence of her predominance as an ocean power. Take away her merchant fleets, take away the navy that guards them,—her empire will come to an end, her colonies will fall off like leaves from a withered tree, and Britain will become once more an insignificant island in the North Sea, for the future students in Australian and New Zealand universities to discuss the fate of in their debating societies.

How the English navy came to hold so extraordinary a position is worth reflecting on. Much has been written on it, but little, as it seems to me, which touches the heart of the matter. We are shown the power of our country growing and expanding. But how it grew; why, after a sleep of so many hundred years, the genius of our Scandinavian forefathers suddenly sprang again into life,—of this we are left without explanation.

The beginning was undoubtedly the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. Down to that time the sea sovereignty belonged to the Spaniards, and had been fairly won by them. The conquest of Granada had stimulated and elevated the Spanish character. The subjects of Ferdinand and Isabella, of Charles V., and Philip II., were extraordinary men and accomplished extraordinary things. They stretched the limits of the known world; they conquered Mexico and Peru; they planted their colonies over the South-American continent; they took possession of the great West-Indian islands, and with so firm a grasp that Cuba at least will never lose the mark of the hand which seized it. They built their cities as if for eternity. They spread to the Indian Ocean, and gave their monarch's name to the Philippines. All this they accomplished in half a century, and as it were, they did it with a single hand; with the other they were fighting Moors and Turks, and protecting the coasts of the Mediterranean from the corsairs of Tunis and Constantinople.

They had risen on the crest of the wave, and with their proud *Non Sufficit Orbis* were looking for new worlds to conquer, at a time when the bark of the English water-dogs had scarcely been heard beyond their own fishing grounds, and the largest merchant vessel sailing from the port of London was scarce bigger than a modern coasting collier. And yet within the space of a single ordinary life these insignificant islanders had struck the sceptre from the Spaniards' grasp and placed the ocean crown on the brow of their own sovereign. How did it come about? What Cadmus had sown dragons' teeth in the furrows of the sea, for the race to spring from who manned the ships of Queen Elizabeth, who carried the flag of their own country round the globe, and challenged and fought the Spaniards on their own coasts and in their own harbors?

The English sea power was the legitimate child of the Reformation. It grew, as I shall show you, directly out of the new despised Protestantism. Matthew Parker and Bishop Jewell, the judicious Hooker himself, excellent men as they were, would have written and preached to small purpose without Sir Francis Drake's cannon to play an accompaniment to their teaching. And again, Drake's cannon would not have roared so loudly and so widely, without seamen already trained in heart and hand to work his ships and level his artillery. It was to the superior seamanship, the superior quality of English ships and crews, that the Spaniards attributed their defeat. Where did these ships come from? Where and how did these mariners learn their trade? Historians talk enthusiastically of the national spirit of a people rising with a united heart to repel the invader, and so on. But national spirit could not extemporize a fleet, or produce trained officers and sailors to match the conquerors of Lepanto. One slight observation I must make here at starting, and certainly with no invidious purpose. It has been said confidently,—it has been repeated, I believe, by all modern writers,—that the Spanish invasion suspended in England the quarrels of creed, and united Protestants and Roman Catholics in defense of their Queen and country. They remind us especially that Lord Howard of Effingham, who was Elizabeth's admiral, was himself a Roman Catholic. But was it so? The Earl of Arundel, the head of the House of Howard, was a Roman Catholic, and he was in the Tower praying for the success of Medina Sidonia. Lord Howard of Effingham was no more a Roman Catholic than —I hope I am not taking away their character—than the present Archbishop of Canterbury or the Bishop of London. He was a Catholic, but an English Catholic, as those reverend prelates are. Roman Catholic he could not possibly have been, nor any one who on that great occasion was found on the side of

Elizabeth. A Roman Catholic is one who acknowledges the Roman Bishop's authority. The Pope had excommunicated Elizabeth, had pronounced her deposed, had absolved her subjects from their allegiance and forbidden them to fight for her. No Englishman who fought on that great occasion for English liberty was, or could have been, in communion with Rome. Loose statements of this kind, lightly made, fall in with the modern humor. They are caught up, applauded, repeated, and pass unquestioned into history. It is time to correct them a little.

THE DEATH OF COLONEL GORING

From 'Two Chiefs of Dunboy'

Fatally mistaking what was intended for a friendly warning, the colonel conceived that there was some one in the forge whom the smith wanted to conceal.

"I may return or not," he said; "but I must first have a word with these strangers of yours. We can meet as friends for once, with nothing to dispute over."

Minahan made no further attempt to prevent him from going in. If gentlemen chose to have their quarrels, he muttered between his teeth, it was no business of his.

Goring pushed open the door and entered. By the dim light — for the shutter that had been thrown back had been closed again, and the only light came from a window in the roof — he made out three figures standing together at the further end of the forge, in one of whom, though he tried to conceal himself, he instantly recognized his visitor of the previous evening.

"You here, my man?" he said. "You left my house two hours ago. Why are you not on your way home?"

Sylvester, seeing he was discovered, turned his face full round, and in a voice quietly insolent, replied, "I fell in with some friends of mine on the road. We had a little business together, and it is good luck that has brought your honor to us while we are talking, for the jintlemen here have a word or two they would like to be saying to ye, colonel, before ye leave them."

"To me!" said Goring, turning from Sylvester to the two figures, whose faces were still covered by their cloaks. "If these gentlemen are what I suppose them to be, I am glad to meet them, and will hear willingly what they may have to say."

"Perhaps less willingly than you think, Colonel Goring," said the taller of the two, who rose and stepped behind him to the door, which he closed and barred. Goring, looking at him with some surprise, saw that he was the person whom he had met on the mountains, and had afterwards seen at the funeral at Derreen. The third man rose from a bench on which he had been leaning, lifted his cap, and said:—

"There is an old proverb, sir, that short accounts make long friends. There can be no friendship between you and me, but the account between us is of very old standing. I have returned to Ireland, only for a short stay; I am about to leave it, never to come back. A gentleman and a soldier, like yourself, cannot wish that I should go while that account is still unsettled. Our fortunate meeting here this morning provides us with an opportunity."

It was Morty's voice that he heard, and Morty's face that he saw as he became accustomed to the gloom. He looked again at the pretended messenger from the carded curate, and he then remembered the old Sylvester who had brought the note from Lord Fitzmaurice to the agent from Kenmare. In an instant the meaning of the whole situation flashed across him. It was no casual re-encounter. He had been enticed into the place where he found himself, with some sinister and perhaps deadly purpose. A strange fatality had forced him again and again into collision with the man of whose ancestral lands he had come into possession. Once more, by a deliberate and treacherous contrivance, he and the chief of the O'Sullivans had been brought face to face together, and he was alone, without a friend within call of him; unless his tenant, who as he could now see had intended to give him warning, would interfere further in his defense. And of this he knew Ireland well enough to be aware that there was little hope.

He supposed that they intended to murder him. The door, at which he involuntarily glanced, was fastened by this time with iron bolts. He was a man of great personal strength and activity, but in such a situation neither would be likely to avail him. Long inured to danger, and ready at all moments to meet whatever peril might threaten him, he calmly faced his adversary and said:—

"This meeting is not accidental, as you would have me believe. You have contrived it. Explain yourself further."

"Colonel Goring," said Morty Sullivan, "you will recall the circumstances under which we last parted. Enemy as you are and always have been to me and mine, I will do you the justice to say that on that occasion you behaved like a gentleman and a man of courage. But our quarrel was not fought out. Persons present interfered between us. We are now alone, and can complete what was then left unfinished."

"Whether I did well or ill, sir," the colonel answered, "in giving you the satisfaction which you demanded of me at the time you speak of, I will not now say. But I tell you that the only relations which can exist between us at present are those between a magistrate and a criminal who has forfeited his life. If you mean to murder me, you can do it; you have me at advantage. You can thus add one more to the list of villainies with which you have stained an honorable name. If you mean that I owe you a reparation for personal injuries, such as the customs of Ireland allow one gentleman to require from another, this, as you well know, is not the way to ask for it. But I acknowledge no such right. When I last encountered you I but partly knew you. I now know you altogether. You have been a pirate on the high seas. Your letters of marque do not cover you, for you are a subject of the King, and have broken your allegiance. Such as you are, you stand outside the pale of honorable men, and I should degrade the uniform I wear if I were to stoop to measure arms with you."

The sallow olive of Morty's cheek turned livid. He clutched the bench before him, till the muscles of his hands stood out like knots of rope.

"You are in my power, colonel," he said: "do not tempt me too far. If my sins have been many, my wrongs are more. It must be this or worse. One word from me, and you are a dead man."

He laid four pistols on the smith's tool-chest. "Take a pair of them," he said. "They are loaded alike. Take which you please. Let us stand on the opposite sides of this hovel, and so make an end. If I fall, I swear on my soul you shall have no hurt from any of my people. My friend Connell is an officer of mine, but he holds a commission besides in the Irish Brigade. There is no better-born gentleman in Kerry. His presence here is your sufficient security. You shall return to Dunboy as safe from harm as if you had the Viceroy's body-guard about you, or your own boat's crew that shot down my poor fellows at Glengariff. To this I pledge you my honor."

"Your honor!" said Goring; "your honor! And you tempted me here by a lying tale, sent by the lips of yonder skulking rascal. That alone, sir, were there nothing else, would have sufficed to show what you are."

A significant click caught the ear of both the speakers. Looking round, they saw Sylvester had cocked a pistol.

"Drop that," said Morty, "or by God! kinsman of mine though you be, I will drive a bullet through the brain of you. Enough of this, sir," he said, turning to Goring. "Time passes, and this scene must end. I would have arranged it otherwise, but you yourself know that by this way alone I could have brought you to the meeting. Take the pistols, I say, or by the bones of my ancestors that lie buried under Dunboy Castle yonder, I will call in my men from outside, and they shall strip you bare, and score such marks on you as the quartermaster leaves on the slaves that you hire to fight your battles. Prince Charles will laugh when I tell him in Paris how I served one at least of the hounds that chased him at Culloden."

The forge in which this scene was going on was perfectly familiar to Goring, for he had himself designed it and built it. There was the ordinary broad open front to the road, constructed of timber, which was completely shut. The rest of the building was of stone, and in the wall at the back there was a small door leading into a field, and thence into the country. Could this door be opened, there was a chance, though but a faint one, of escape. A bar lay across, but of no great thickness. The staple into which it ran was slight. A vigorous blow might shatter both.

Sylvester caught the direction of Goring's eye, caught its meaning, and threw himself in the way. The colonel snatched a heavy hammer which stood against the wall. With the suddenness of an electric flash he struck Sylvester on the shoulder, broke his collar-bone, and hurled him back senseless, doubled over the anvil. A second stroke, catching the bar in the middle, shattered it in two, and the door hung upon the latch. Morty and Connell, neither of whom had intended foul play, hesitated, and in another moment Goring would have been free and away. Connell, recovering himself, sprang forward and closed with him. The colonel, who had been the most accomplished wrestler of his regiment, whirled him round, flung him with a heavy fall on the floor, and had his hand on the latch when, half stunned as he was, Connell recovered his feet, drew a skene, and rushed at Colonel Goring again. So sudden it all was, so swift the struggle, and so dim the light, that from the other end it was hard to see what was happening. Wrenching the skene out of Connell's hands, and with the hot spirit of battle in him, Colonel Goring was on the point of driving it into his assailant's side.

«Shoot, Morty! shoot, or I am a dead man!» Connell cried.

Morty, startled and uncertain what to do, had mechanically snatched up a pistol when Sylvester was struck down. He raised his hand at Connell's cry. It shook from excitement, and locked together as the two figures were, he was as likely to hit friend as foe. Again Connell called, and Morty fired and missed; and the mark of the bullet is still shown in the wall of the smithy as a sacred reminiscence of a fight for Irish liberty. The second shot went true to its mark. Connell had been beaten down, though unwounded, and Goring's tall form stood out above him in clear view. This time Morty's hand did not fail him. A shiver passed through Goring's limbs. His arms dropped. He staggered back against the door, and the door yielded, and he fell upon the ground outside. But it was not to rise and fly. The ball had struck him clean above the ear, and buried itself in the brain. He was dead.

SCIENTIFIC METHOD APPLIED TO HISTORY

From ‹Short Studies on Great Subjects›

HISTORICAL facts can only be verified by the skeptical and the inquiring, and skepticism and inquiry nip like a black frost the eager credulity in which legendary biographies took their rise. You can watch such stories as they grew in the congenial soil of belief. The great saints of the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries, who converted Europe to Christianity, were as modest and unpretending as true, genuine men always are. They claimed no miraculous powers for themselves. Miracles might have been worked in the days of their fathers. They for their own parts relied on nothing but the natural powers of persuasion and example. Their companions, who knew them personally in life, were only a little more extravagant. Miracles and portents vary in an inverse ratio with the distance of time. St. Patrick is absolutely silent about his own conjuring performances. He told his followers, perhaps, that he had been moved by his good angel to devote himself to the conversion of Ireland. The angel of metaphor becomes in the next generation an actual seraph. On a rock in the county of Down there is, or was, a singular mark, representing rudely the outline of a foot. From that rock, where the young Patrick was feeding his master's sheep, a writer of the sixth century tells us that the angel Victor sprang back to heaven after delivering his message, and left behind him the imprinted witness of his august visit. Another hundred years pass, and legends from Hegesippus are imported into the life of the Irish apostle. St. Patrick and the Druid enchanter contend before King Leogaire on Tara Hill, as Simon Magus and St. Peter contended before the Emperor Nero. Again a century, and we are in a world of wonders where every human lineament is lost. St. Patrick, when a boy of twelve, lights a fire with icicles; when he comes to Ireland he floats thither upon an altar-stone which Pope Celestine had blessed for him. He conjures a Welsh marauder into a wolf, makes a goat cry out in the stomach of a thief who had stolen him, and restores dead men to life, not once or twice but twenty times. The wonders with which the atmosphere is charged gravitate towards the largest concrete figure which is moving in the middle of them, till at last, as Gibbon says, the sixty-six lives of St. Patrick which were extant in the twelfth century must have contained at least as many thousand lies. And yet of conscious lying there was very little; perhaps nothing at all. The biographers wrote in good faith and were industrious collectors of material, only their notions of probability were radically different from ours. The more marvelous a story, the less credit we give to it; warned by experience of carelessness, credulity, and fraud, we disbelieve everything for which we cannot find contemporary evidence, and from the value of that evidence we subtract whatever may be due to prevalent opinion or superstition. To the mediæval writer, the more stupendous the miracle the more likely it was to be true; he believed everything which he could not prove to be false, and proof was not external testimony, but inherent fitness.

So much for the second period of what is called human history. In the first or mythological there is no historical groundwork at all. In the next or heroic we have accounts of real persons, but handed down to us by writers to whom the past was a world of marvels, whose delight was to dwell upon the mighty works which had been done in the old times, whose object was to elevate into superhuman proportions the figures of the illustrious men who had distinguished themselves as apostles or warriors. They thus appear to us like their portraits in stained-glass windows, represented rather in a transcendental condition of beatitude than in the modest and checkered colors of real life. We see them not as they were, but as they appeared to an adoring imagination, and in a costume of which we can only affirm with certainty that it was never worn by any child of Adam on this plain, prosaic earth. For facts as facts there is as yet no appreciation; they are shifted to and fro, dropped out of sight, or magnified, or transferred from owner to owner,—manipulated to suit or decorate a preconceived and brilliant idea. We are still in the domain of poetry, where the canons of the art require fidelity to general principles, and allow free play to fancy in details. The Virgins of Raphael are no less beautiful as paintings, no less masterpieces of workmanship, though in no single feature either of face or form or costume they resemble the historical mother of Christ, or even resemble one another.

At the next stage we pass with the chroniclers into history proper. The chronicler is not a poet like his predecessor. He does not shape out consistent pictures with a beginning, a middle, and an end. He is a narrator of events, and he connects them together on a chronological string. He professes to be relating facts. He is not idealizing, he is not singing the praises of the heroes of the sword or the crosier; he means to be true in the literal and commonplace sense of that ambiguous word. And yet in his earlier phases, take him in what part of the world we please,—take him in ancient Egypt or Assyria, in Greece or in Rome, or in modern Europe,—he is but a step in advance of his predecessor. He is excellent company. He never moralizes, never bores you with philosophy of history or political economy. He never speculates about causes. But on the other hand, he is uncritical. He takes unsuspectingly the materials which he finds ready to his hand,—the national ballads, the romances, and the biographies. He transfers to his pages whatever catches his fancy. The more picturesque an anecdote, the more unhesitatingly he writes it down, though in the same proportion it is the less likely to be authentic. Romulus and Remus suckled by the wolf;

Curtius jumping into the gulf; our English Alfred spoiling the cakes; or Bruce watching the leap of the spider,—stories of this kind he relates with the same simplicity with which he records the birth in his own day, in some outlandish village, of a child with two heads, or the appearance of the sea-serpent or the flying dragon. Thus the chronicle, however charming, is often nothing but poetry taken literally and translated into prose. It grows, however, and improves insensibly with the growth of the nation. Like the drama, it develops from poor beginnings into the loftiest art, and becomes at last perhaps the very best kind of historical writing which has yet been produced. Herodotus and Livy, Froissart and Hall and Holinshed, are as great in their own departments as Sophocles or Terence or Shakespeare. We are not yet entirely clear of portents and prodigies. Superstition clings to us as our shadow, and is to be found in the wisest as well as the weakest. The Romans, the most practical people that ever lived,—a people so pre-eminently effective that they have printed their character indelibly into the constitution of Europe,—these Romans, at the very time they were making themselves the world's masters, allowed themselves to be influenced in the most important affairs of State by a want of appetite in the sacred chickens, or the color of the entrails of a calf. Take him at his best, man is a great fool. It is likely enough that we ourselves habitually say and practice things which a thousand years hence will seem not a jot less absurd. Cato tells us that the Roman augurs could not look one another in the face without laughing; and I have heard that bishops in some parts of the world betray sometimes analogous misgivings.

In able and candid minds, however, stuff of this kind is tolerably harmless, and was never more innocent than in the case of the first great historian of Greece. Herodotus was a man of vast natural powers. Inspired by a splendid subject, and born at the most favorable time, he grew to manhood surrounded by the heroes of Marathon and Salamis and Platæa. The wonders of Egypt and Assyria were for the first time thrown open to the inspection of strangers. The gloss of novelty was not yet worn off, and the impressions falling fresh on an eager, cultivated, but essentially simple and healthy mind, there were qualities and conditions combined which produced one of the most delightful books which was ever written. He was an intense patriot; and he was unvexed with theories, political or moral. His philosophy was like Shakespeare's,—a calm, intelligent insight into human things. He had no views of his own, which the fortunes of Greece or other countries were to be manipulated to illustrate. The world as he saw it was a well-made, altogether promising and interesting world; and his object was to relate what he had seen and what he had heard and learnt, faithfully and accurately. His temperament was rather believing than skeptical; but he was not idly credulous. He can be critical when occasion requires. He distinguishes always between what he had seen with his own eyes and what others told him. He uses his judgment freely, and sets his readers on their guard against uncertain evidence. And there is not a book existing which contains in the same space so much important truth,—truth which survives the sharpest test that modern discoveries can apply to it.

The same may be said in a slightly less degree of Livy and of the best of the late European chroniclers: you have the same freshness, the same vivid perception of external life, the same absence of what philosophers call subjectivity,—the projection into the narrative of the writer's own personality, his opinions, thoughts, and theories. Still, in all of them, however vivid, however vigorous the representation, there is a vein of fiction largely and perhaps consciously intermingled. In a modern work of history, when a statesman is introduced as making a speech, the writer at any rate supposes that such a speech was actually made. He has found an account of it somewhere either in detail or at least in outline or epitome. The boldest fabricator would not venture to introduce an entire and complete invention. This was not the case with the older authors. Thucydides tells us frankly that the speeches which he interweaves with his narrative were his own composition. They were intended as dramatic representations of the opinions of the factions and parties with which Greece was divided, and they were assigned to this person or to that, as he supposed them to be internally suitable. Herodotus had set Thucydides the example, and it was universally followed. No speech given by any old historian can be accepted as literally true unless there is a specific intimation to that effect. Deception was neither practiced nor pretended. It was a convenient method of exhibiting characters and situations, and it was therefore adopted without hesitation or reserve.

THE DEATH OF THOMAS BECKET

From ‹Short Studies on Great Subjects›

The knights were introduced. They advanced. The archbishop neither spoke nor looked at them, but continued talking to a monk who was next him. He himself was sitting on a bed. The rest of the party present were on the floor. The knights seated themselves in the same manner, and for a few moments there was silence. Then Becket's black, restless eye glanced from one to the other. He slightly noticed Tracy; and Fitzurse said a few unrecorded sentences to him, which ended with "God help you!" To Becket's friends the words sounded like insolence. They may have meant no more than pity for the deliberate fool who was forcing destruction upon himself.

Becket's face flushed. Fitzurse went on, "We bring you the commands of the King beyond the sea; will you hear us in public or in private?" Becket said he cared not. "In private, then," said Fitzurse. The monks thought afterwards that Fitzurse had meant to kill the archbishop where he sat. If the knights had entered the palace, thronged as it was with men, with any such intention, they would scarcely have left their swords behind them. The room was cleared, and a short altercation followed, of which nothing is known save that it ended speedily in high words on both sides. Becket called in his clergy again, his lay servants being excluded, and bade Fitzurse go on. "Be it so," Sir Reginald said. "Listen, then, to what the King says. When the peace was made, he put aside all his complaints against you. He allowed you to return, as you desired, free to your see. You have now added contempt to your other offenses. You have broken the treaty. You have allowed your pride to tempt you to defy your lord and master to your own sorrow. You have censured the bishops by whose administration the Prince was crowned. You have pronounced an anathema against the King's ministers, by whose advice he is guided in the management of the empire. You have made it plain that if you could you would take the Prince's crown from him. Your plots and contrivances to attain your ends are notorious to all men. Say, then, will you attend us to the King's presence, and there answer for yourself? For this we are sent."

The archbishop declared that he had never wished any hurt to the Prince. The King had no occasion to be displeased if crowds came about him in the towns and cities, after having been so long deprived of his presence. If he had done any wrong he would make satisfaction, but he protested against being suspected of intentions which had never entered his mind.

Fitzurse did not enter into an altercation with him, but continued:—« The King commands further that you and your clerks repair without delay to the young King's presence, and swear allegiance, and promise to amend your faults.»

The archbishop's temper was fast rising. «I will do whatever may be reasonable,» he said, «but I tell you plainly, the King shall have no oaths from me, nor from any one of my clergy. There has been too much perjury already. I have absolved many, with God's help, who had perjured themselves. I will absolve the rest when he permits.»

«I understand you to say that you will not obey,» said Fitzurse, and went on in the same tone:—«The King commands you to absolve the bishops whom you have excommunicated without his permission» (*absque licentiâ suâ*).

«The Pope sentenced the bishops,» the archbishop said. «If you are not pleased, you must go to him. The affair is none of mine.»

Fitzurse said it had been done at his instigation, which he did not deny; but he proceeded to reassert that the King had given his permission. He had complained at the time of the peace of the injury which he had suffered in the coronation, and the King had told him that he might obtain from the Pope any satisfaction for which he liked to ask.

If this was all the consent which the King had given, the pretense of his authority was inexcusable. Fitzurse could scarce hear the archbishop out with patience. «Ay, ay!» said he; «will you make the King out to be a traitor, then? The King gave you leave to excommunicate the bishops when they were acting by his own order! It is more than we can bear to listen to such monstrous accusations.»

John of Salisbury tried to check the archbishop's imprudent tongue, and whispered to him to speak to the knights in private; but when the passion was on him, no mule was more ungovernable than Becket. Drawing to a conclusion, Fitzurse said to him:—«Since you refuse to do any one of those things which the King requires of you, his final commands are that you and your clergy shall forthwith depart out of this realm and out of his dominions, never more to return. You have broken the peace, and the King cannot trust you again."

Becket answered wildly that he would not go — never again would he leave England. Nothing but death should now part him from his church. Stung by the reproach of ill-faith, he poured out the catalogue of his own injuries. He had been promised restoration, and instead of restoration he had been robbed and insulted. Ranulf de Broc had laid an embargo on his wine. Robert de Broc had cut off his mule's tail; and now the knights had come to menace him.

De Morville said that if he had suffered any wrong he had only to appeal to the Council, and justice would be done.

Becket did not wish for the Council's justice. "I have complained enough," he said; "so many wrongs are daily heaped upon me that I could not find messengers to carry the tale of them. I am refused access to the court. Neither one king nor the other will do me right. I will endure it no more. I will use my own powers as archbishop, and no child of man shall prevent me."

"You will lay the realm under interdict, then, and excommunicate the whole of us?" said Fitzurse.

"So God help me," said one of the others, "he shall not do that. He has excommunicated over-many already. We have borne too long with him."

The knights sprang to their feet, twisting their gloves and swinging their arms. The archbishop rose. In the general noise words could no longer be accurately heard. At length the knights moved to leave the room, and addressing the archbishop's attendants, said, "In the King's name we command you to see that this man does not escape."

"Do you think I shall fly, then?" cried the archbishop. "Neither for the King nor for any living man will I fly. You cannot be more ready to kill me than I am to die. . . . Here you will find me," he shouted, following them to the door as they went out, and calling after them. Some of his friends thought that he had asked De Morville to come back and speak quietly with him, but it was not so. He returned to his seat, still excited and complaining.

"My lord," said John of Salisbury to him, "it is strange that you will never be advised. What occasion was there for you to go after these men and exasperate them with your bitter speeches?

You would have done better, surely, by being quiet and giving them a milder answer. They mean no good, and you only commit yourself."

The archbishop sighed, and said, "I have done with advice. I know what I have before me."

It was four o'clock when the knights entered. It was now nearly five; and unless there were lights the room must have been almost dark. Beyond the archbishop's chamber was an ante-room, beyond the ante-room the hall. The knights, passing through the hall into the quadrangle, and thence to the lodge, called their men to arms. The great gate was closed. A mounted guard was stationed outside, with orders to allow no one to go out or in. The knights threw off their cloaks and buckled on their swords. This was the work of a few minutes. From the cathedral tower the vesper bell was beginning to sound. The archbishop had seated himself to recover from the agitation of the preceding scene, when a breathless monk rushed in to say that the knights were arming. "Who cares? Let them arm," was all that the archbishop said. His clergy was less indifferent. If the archbishop was ready for death, they were not. The door from the hall into the court was closed and barred, and a short respite was thus secured. The intention of the knights, it may be presumed, was to seize the archbishop and carry him off to Saltwood or to De Morville's castle at Knaresborough, or perhaps to Normandy. Coming back to execute their purpose, they found themselves stopped by the hall door. To burst it open would require time; the ante-room between the hall and the archbishop's apartments opened by an oriel window and an outside stair into a garden. Robert de Broc, who knew the house well, led the way to it in the dark. The steps were broken, but a ladder was standing against the window, by which the knights mounted, and the crash of the falling casement told the fluttered group about the archbishop that their enemies were upon them. There was still a moment. The party who entered by the window, instead of turning into the archbishop's room, first went into the hall to open the door and admit their comrades. From the archbishop's room a second passage, little used, opened into the northwest corner of the cloister, and from the cloister there was a way into the north transept of the cathedral. The cry was "To the church! To the church!" There at least there would be immediate safety.

The archbishop had told the knights that they would find him where they left him. He did not choose to show fear; or he was afraid, as some thought, of losing his martyrdom. He would not move. The bell had ceased. They reminded him that vespers had begun, and that he ought to be in the cathedral. Half yielding, half resisting, his friends swept him down the passage into the cloister. His cross had been forgotten in the haste. He refused to stir till it was fetched and carried before him as usual. Then only, himself incapable of fear, and rebuking the terror of the rest, he advanced deliberately to the door into the south transept. His train was scattered behind him, all along the cloister from the passage leading out of the palace. As he entered the church, cries were heard, from which it became plain that the knights had broken into the archbishop's room, had found the passage, and were following him. Almost immediately Fitzurse, Tracy, De Morville, and Le Breton were discerned in the dim light, coming through the cloister in their armor, with drawn swords, and axes in their left hands. A company of men-at-arms was behind them. In front they were driving before them a frightened flock of monks.

From the middle of the transept in which the archbishop was standing, a single pillar rose into the roof. On the eastern side of it opened a chapel of St. Benedict, in which were the tombs of several of the old primates. On the west, running of course parallel to the nave, was a Lady chapel. Behind the pillar, steps led up into the choir, where voices were already singing vespers. A faint light may have been reflected into the transept from the choir tapers, and candles may perhaps have been burning before the altars in the two chapels; of light from without through the windows at that hour there could have been none. Seeing the knights coming on, the clergy who had entered with the archbishop closed the door and barred it. «What do you fear?» he cried in a clear, loud voice. «Out of the way, you coward! the Church of God must not be made a fortress.» He stepped back and reopened the door with his own hands, to let in the trembling wretches who had been shut out among the wolves. They rushed past him, and scattered in the hiding-places of the vast sanctuary, in the crypt, in the galleries, or behind the tombs. All, or almost all, even of his closest friends,—William of Canterbury, Benedict, John of Salisbury himself,—forsook him to shift for themselves, admitting frankly that they were unworthy of martyrdom. The archbishop was left alone with his chaplain Fitzstephen, Robert of Merton his old master, and Edward Grim, the stranger from Cambridge,—or perhaps with Grim only, who says that he was the only one who stayed, and was the only one certainly who showed any sign of courage. A cry had been raised in the choir that armed men were breaking into the cathedral. The vespers ceased; the few monks assembled left their seats and rushed to the edge of the transept, looking wildly into the darkness.

The archbishop was on the fourth step beyond the central pillar ascending into the choir, when the knights came in. The outline of his figure may have been just visible to them, if light fell upon it from candles in the Lady chapel. Fitzurse passed to the right of the pillar, De Morville, Tracy, and Le Breton to the left. Robert de Broc, and Hugh Mauclerc, another apostate priest, remained at the door by which they entered. A voice cried, «Where is the traitor? Where is Thomas Becket?» There was silence; such a name could not be acknowledged. «Where is the archbishop?» Fitzurse shouted. «I am here,» the archbishop replied, descending the steps, and meeting the knights full in the face. «What do you want with me? I am not afraid of your swords. I will not do what is unjust.» The knights closed round him. «Absolve the persons whom you have excommunicated,» they said, «and take off the suspensions.» «They have made no satisfaction,» he answered; «I will not.» «Then you shall die as you have deserved,» they said.

They had not meant to kill him—certainly not at that time and in that place. One of them touched him on the shoulder with the flat of his sword, and hissed in his ears, «Fly, or you are a dead man.» There was still time; with a few steps he would have been lost in the gloom of the cathedral, and could have concealed him in any one of a hundred hiding-places. But he was careless of life, and he felt that his time was come. «I am ready to die,» he said. «May the Church through my blood obtain peace and liberty! I charge you in the name of God that you hurt no one here but me.»

The people from the town were now pouring into the cathedral; De Morville was keeping them back with difficulty at the head of the steps from the choir, and there was danger of a rescue. Fitzurse seized him, meaning to drag him off as a prisoner. He had been calm so far; his pride rose at the indignity of an arrest. «Touch me not, thou abominable wretch!» he said, wrenching his cloak out of Fitzurse's grasp. «Off, thou pander, thou!» Le Breton and Fitzurse grasped him again, and tried to force him upon Tracy's back. He grappled with Tracy and flung him to the ground, and then stood with his back against the pillar, Edward Grim supporting him. Fitzurse, stung by the foul epithet which Becket had thrown at him, swept his sword over him and dashed off his cap. Tracy, rising from the pavement, struck direct at his head. Grim raised his arm and caught the blow. The arm fell broken, and the one friend found faithful sank back disabled against the wall. The sword with its remaining force wounded the archbishop above the forehead, and the blood trickled down his face. Standing firmly, with his hands clasped, he bent his neck for the death-stroke, saying in a low voice, «I am prepared to die for Christ and for his Church.» These were his last words. Tracy again struck him. He fell forward upon his knees and hands. In that position Le Breton dealt him a blow which severed the scalp from the head and broke the sword against the stone, saying, «Take that for my Lord William.» De Broc or Mauclerc — the needless ferocity was attributed to both of them — strode forward from the cloister door, set his foot on the neck of the dead lion, and spread the brains upon the pavement with his sword's point. «We may go,» he said; «the traitor is dead, and will trouble us no more.»

Such was the murder of Becket, the echoes of which are still heard across seven centuries of time, and which, be the final judgment upon it what it may, has its place among the most enduring incidents of English history. Was Becket a martyr, or was he justly executed as a traitor to his sovereign? Even in that supreme moment of terror and wonder, opinions were divided among his own monks. That very night Grim heard one of them say, «He is no martyr, he is justly served.» Another said — scarcely feeling, perhaps, the meaning of the words, — «He wished to be king and more than king. Let him be king, let him be king.» Whether the cause for which he died was to prevail, or whether the sacrifice had been in vain, hung on the answer which would be given to this momentous question. In a few days or weeks an answer came in a form to which in that age no rejoinder was possible; and the only uncertainty which remained at Canterbury was whether it was lawful to use the ordinary prayers for the repose of the dead man's soul, or whether, in consequence of the astounding miracles which were instantly worked by his remains, the Pope's judgment ought not to be anticipated, and the archbishop ought not to be at once adored as a saint in heaven.

CHARACTER OF HENRY VIII.

From the ‹History of England›

PROTESTANTS and Catholics united to condemn a government under which both had suffered; and a point on which enemies were agreed was assumed to be proved. When I commenced the examination of the records, I brought with me the inherited impression, from which I had neither any thought nor any expectation that I should be disabused. I found that it melted between my hands, and with it disappeared that other fact, so difficult to credit, yet as it had appeared so impossible to deny, that English Parliaments, English judges, English clergy, statesmen whose beneficent legislature survives among the most valued of our institutions, prelates who were the founders and martyrs of the English Church, were the cowardly accomplices of abominable atrocities, and had disgraced themselves with a sycophancy which the Roman Senate imperfectly approached when it fawned on Nero.

Henry had many faults. They have been exhibited in the progress of the narrative: I need not return to them. But his position was one of unexampled difficulty; and by the work which he accomplished, and the conditions, internal and external, under which his task was allotted to him, he, like every other man, ought to be judged. He was inconsistent: he can bear the reproach of it. He ended by accepting and approving what he had commenced with persecuting; yet it was with the honest inconsistency which distinguishes the conduct of most men of practical ability in times of change, and even by virtue of which they obtain their success. If at the commencement of the movement he had regarded the eucharist as a «remembrance,» he must either have concealed his convictions or he would have forfeited his throne; if he had been a stationary bigot, the Reformation might have waited for a century, and would have been conquered only by an internecine war.

But as the nation moved the King moved, leading it, but not outrunning it; checking those who went too fast, dragging forward those who lagged behind. The conservatives, all that was sound and good among them, trusted him because he so long continued to share their conservatism; when he threw it aside he was not reproached with breach of confidence, because his own advance had accompanied theirs.

Protestants have exclaimed against the Six Articles Bill; Romanists against the Act of Supremacy. Philosophers complain that the prejudices of the people were needlessly violated, that opinions should have been allowed to be free, and the reform of religion have been left to be accomplished by reason. Yet, however cruel was the Six Articles Bill, the governing classes even among the laity were unanimous in its favor. The King was not converted by a sudden miracle; he believed the traditions in which he had been trained; his eyes, like the eyes of others, opened but slowly; and unquestionably, had he conquered for himself in their fullness the modern principles of toleration, he could not have governed by them a nation which was itself intolerant. Perhaps, of all living Englishmen who shared Henry's faith, there was not one so little desirous in himself of enforcing it by violence. His personal exertions were ever to mitigate the action of the law, while its letter was sustained; and England at its worst was a harbor of refuge to the Protestants, compared to the Netherlands, to France, to Spain, or even to Scotland.

That the Romanists should have regarded him as a tyrant is natural; and were it true that English subjects owed fealty to the Pope, their feeling was just. But however desirable it may be to leave religious opinion unfettered, it is certain that if England was legitimately free, she could tolerate no difference of opinion on a question of allegiance, so long as Europe was conspiring to bring her back into slavery. So long as the English Romanists refused to admit without mental reservation that, if foreign enemies invaded this country in the Pope's name, their place must be at the side of their own sovereign, «religion» might palliate the moral guilt of their treason, but it could not exempt them from its punishment.

But these matters have been discussed in the details of this history, where alone they can be understood.

Beyond and besides the Reformation, the constitution of these islands now rests in large measure on foundations laid in this reign. Henry brought Ireland within the reach of English civilization. He absorbed Wales and the Palatinates into the general English system. He it was who raised the House of Commons from the narrow duty of voting supplies, and of passing without discussion the measures of the Privy Council, and converted them into the first power in the State under the Crown. When he ascended the throne, so little did the Commons care for their privileges that their attendance at the sessions of Parliament was enforced by a law. They woke into life in 1529, and they became the right hand of the King to subdue the resistance of the House of Lords, and to force upon them a course of legislation which from their hearts they detested. Other kings in times of difficulty summoned their "great councils," composed of peers, or prelates, or municipal officials, or any persons whom they pleased to nominate. Henry VIII. broke through the ancient practice, and ever threw himself on the representatives of the people. By the Reformation and by the power which he forced upon them, he had so interwoven the House of Commons with the highest business of the State that the peers thenceforward sunk to be their shadow.

Something, too, ought to be said of his individual exertions in the details of State administration. In his earlier life, though active and assiduous, he found leisure for elegant accomplishments, for splendid amusements, for relaxations careless, extravagant, sometimes questionable. As his life drew onwards, his lighter tastes disappeared, and the whole energy of his intellect was pressed into the business of the commonwealth. Those who have examined the printed State papers may form some impression of his industry from the documents which are his own composition, and the letters which he wrote and received: but only persons who have seen the original manuscripts, who have observed the traces of his pen in side-notes and corrections, and the handwritings of his secretaries in diplomatic commissions, in drafts of Acts of Parliament, in expositions and formularies, in articles of faith, in proclamations, in the countless multitude of documents of all sorts, secular or ecclesiastical, which contain the real history of this extraordinary reign,—only they can realize the extent of labor to which he sacrificed himself, and which brought his life to a premature close. His personal faults were great, and he shared, besides them, in the errors of his age; but far deeper blemishes would be but as scars upon the features of a sovereign who in trying times sustained nobly the honor of the English name, and carried the commonwealth securely through the hardest crisis in its history.

ON A SIDING AT A RAILWAY STATION

From ‹Short Studies on Great Subjects›

Some years ago I was traveling by railway, no matter whence or whither. I was in a second-class carriage. We had been long on the road, and had still some distance before us, when one evening our journey was brought unexpectedly to an end by the train running into a siding. The guards opened the doors, we were told that we could proceed no further, and were required to alight. The passengers were numerous, and of all ranks and sorts. There were third class, second, first, with saloon carriages for several great persons of high distinction. We had ministers of State, judges on circuit, directors, leading men of business, idle young men of family who were out amusing themselves, an archbishop, several ladies, and a duke and duchess with their suite. These favored travelers had Pullman cars to themselves, and occupied as much room as was allotted to scores of plebeians. I had amused myself for several days in observing the luxurious appurtenances by which they were protected against discomfort,—the piles of cushions and cloaks, the baskets of dainties, the novels and magazines to pass away the time, and the profound attention which they met with from the conductors and station-masters on the line. The rest of us were a miscellaneous crowd,—commercial people, lawyers, artists, men of letters, tourists moving about for pleasure or because they had nothing to do; and in third-class carriages, artisans and laborers in search of work, women looking for husbands or for service, or beggars flying from starvation in one part of the world to find it follow them like their shadows, let them go where they pleased. All these were huddled together, feeding hardly on such poor provisions as they carried with them or could pick up at the stopping-places. No more consideration was shown them than if they had been so many cattle. But they were merry enough: songs and sounds of laughter came from their windows, and notwithstanding all their conveniences, the languid-looking fine people in the large compartments seemed to me to get through their journey with less enjoyment after all than their poor fellow travelers. These last appeared to be of tougher texture, to care less for being jolted and shaken, to be better humored and kinder to one another. They had found life go hard with them wherever they had been, and not being accustomed to have everything which they wished for, they were less selfish and more considerate.

The intimation that our journey was for the present at an end came on most of us as an unpleasant surprise. The grandees got out in a high state of indignation. They called for their servants, but their servants did not hear them, or laughed and passed on. The conductors had forgotten to be obsequious. All classes on the platform were suddenly on a level. A beggar woman hustled the duchess, as she was standing astonished because her maid had left her to carry her own bag. The patricians were pushed about among the crowd with no more concern than if they had been common mortals. They demanded loudly to see the station-master. The minister complained angrily of the delay; an important negotiation would be imperiled by his detention, and he threatened the company with the displeasure of his department. A consequential youth who had just heard of the death of his elder brother was flying home to take his inheritance. A great lady had secured, as she had hoped, a brilliant match for her daughter; her work over, she had been at the baths to recover from the dissipation of the season; difficulty had arisen unlooked for, and unless she was at hand to remove it the worst consequences might be feared. A banker declared that the credit of a leading commercial house might fail, unless he could be at home on the day fixed for his return; he alone could save it. A solicitor had the evidence in his portmanteau which would determine the succession to the lands and title of an ancient family. An elderly gentleman was in despair about his young wife, whom he had left at home; he had made a will by which she was to lose his fortune if she married again after his death, but the will was lying in his desk unsigned. The archbishop was on his way to a synod, where the great question was to be discussed whether gas might be used at the altar instead of candles. The altar candles were blessed before they were used, and the doubt was whether gas could be blessed. The right reverend prelate conceived that if the gas tubes were made in the shape of candles the difficulty could be got over, but he feared that without his moderating influence the majority might come to a rash decision.

All these persons were clamoring over their various anxieties with the most naïve frankness, the truth coming freely out, whatever it might be. One distinguished-looking lady in deep mourning, with a sad, gentle face, alone was resigned and hopeful. It seemed that her husband had been stopped not long before at the same station. She thought it possible that she might meet him again.

The station-master listened to the complaints with composed indifference. He told the loudest that they need not alarm themselves. The State would survive the absence of the minister. The minister, in fact, was not thinking of the State at all, but of the party triumph which he expected; and the peerage which was to be his reward, the station-master said, would now be of no use to him. The youth had a second brother who would succeed instead of him, and the tenants would not be inconvenienced by the change. The fine lady's daughter would marry to her own liking instead of her mother's, and would be all the happier for it. The commercial house was already insolvent, and the longer it lasted the more innocent people would be ruined by it. The boy whom the lawyer intended to make into a rich baronet was now working industriously at school, and would grow up a useful man. If a great estate fell in to him he would be idle and dissolute. The old man might congratulate himself that he had escaped so soon from the scrape into which he had fallen. His wife would marry an adventurer, and would suffer worse from inheriting his fortune. The archbishop was commended for his anxiety. His solution of the candle problem was no doubt an excellent one; but his clergy were now provided with a harmless subject to quarrel over, and if it was adopted they might fall out over something else which might be seriously mischievous.

« Do you mean, then, that you are not going to send us forward at all? » the minister inquired sternly.

« You will see, » the station-master answered with a curious short laugh. I observed that he looked more gently at the lady in mourning. She had said nothing, but he knew what was in her mind, and though he held out no hope in words that her wish would be gratified, he smiled sadly, and the irony passed out of his face.

The crowd meanwhile were standing about the platform, whistling tunes or amusing themselves, not ill-naturedly at the distress of their grand companions. Something considerable was happening. But they had so long experienced the ups and downs of things that they were prepared for what fortune might send.

They had not expected to find a Paradise where they were going, and one place might be as good as another. They had nothing belonging to them except the clothes they stood in and their bits of skill in their different trades. Wherever men were, there would be need of cobblers, and tailors, and smiths, and carpenters. If not, they might fall on their feet somehow, if there was work to be done of any sort.

Presently a bell rang, a door was flung open, and we were ordered into a waiting-room, where we were told that our luggage was to be examined. It was a large, barely furnished apartment, like the *salle d'attente* at the Northern Railway Station at Paris. A rail ran across, behind which we were all penned; opposite to us was the usual long table, on which were piled boxes, bags, and portmanteaus, and behind them stood a row of officials, in a plain uniform with gold bands round their caps, and the dry peremptory manner which passengers accustomed to deference so particularly dislike. At their backs was a screen extending across the room, reaching half-way to the ceiling; in the rear of it there was apparently an office.

We each looked to see that our particular belongings were safe, but we were surprised to find that we could recognize none of them. Packages there were in plenty, alleged to be the property of the passengers who had come in by the train. They were arranged in the three classes,—first, second, and third,—but the proportions were inverted: most of it was labeled as the luggage of the travelers in fustian, who had brought nothing with them but what they carried in their hands; a moderate heap stood where the second-class luggage should have been, and some of superior quality; but none of us could make out the shapes of our own trunks. As to the grand ladies and gentlemen, the innumerable articles which I had seen put as theirs into the van were nowhere to be found. A few shawls and cloaks lay upon the planks, and that was all. There was a loud outcry; but the officials were accustomed to it, and took no notice. The station-master, who was still in charge of us, said briefly that the saloon luggage would be sent forward in the next train. The late owners would have no more use for it, and it would be delivered to their friends.

The late owners! Were we no longer actual owners, then? My individual loss was not great, and besides, it might be made up to me; for I saw my name on a strange box on the table, and being of curious disposition, the singularity of the adventure made it interesting to me. The consternation of the rest was indescribable. The minister supposed that he had fallen among communists, who disbelieved in property, and was beginning a speech on the elementary conditions of society; when silence was called, and the third-class passengers were ordered to advance, that their boxes might be opened. Each man had his own carefully docketed. The lids flew off, and within, instead of clothes, and shoes, and dressing apparatus, and money, and jewels, and such-like, were simply samples of the work which he had done in his life. There was an account-book also, in which were entered the number of days which he had worked, the number and size of the fields, etc., which he had drained and inclosed and plowed, the crops which he had reaped, the walls which he had built, the metal which he had dug out and smelted and fashioned into articles of use to mankind, the leather which he had tanned, the clothes which he had woven,—all entered with punctual exactness; and on the opposite page, the wages which he had received, and the share which had been allotted to him of the good things which he had helped to create.

Besides his work, so specifically called, there were his actions,—his affection for his parents or his wife and children, his self-denials, his charities, his purity, his truth, his honesty; or it might be ugly catalogues of sins and oaths and drunkenness and brutality. But inquiry into action was reserved for a second investigation before a higher commissioner. The first examination was confined to the literal work done by each man for the general good,—how much he had contributed, and how much society had done for him in return; and no one, it seemed, could be allowed to go any further without a certificate of having passed this test satisfactorily. With the workmen, the balance in most instances was found enormously in their favor. The state of the case was so clear that the scrutiny was rapidly got over, and they and their luggage were passed in to the higher court. A few were found whose boxes were empty, who had done nothing useful all their lives, and had subsisted by begging and stealing. These were ordered to stand aside till the rest of us had been disposed of.

The saloon passengers were taken next. Most of them, who had nothing at all to show, were called up together and were asked what they had to say for themselves. A well-dressed gentleman, who spoke for the rest, said that the whole investigation was a mystery to him. He and his friends had been born to good fortunes, and had found themselves, on entering upon life, amply provided for. They had never been told that work was required of them, either work with their hands or work with their heads,—in fact, work of any kind. It was right of course for the poor to work, because they could not honestly live otherwise. For themselves, they had spent their time in amusements, generally innocent. They had paid for everything which they had consumed. They had stolen nothing, taken nothing from any man by violence or fraud. They had kept the Commandments, all ten of them, from the time when they were old enough to understand them. The speaker, at least, declared that he had no breach of any Commandment on his own conscience, and he believed that he might say as much of his companions. They were superior people, who had been always looked up to and well spoken of; and to call upon them to show what they had done was against reason and equity.

«Gentlemen,» said the chief official, «we have heard this many times; yet as often as it is repeated we feel fresh astonishment. You have been in a world where work is the condition of life. Not a meal can be had by any man that some one has not worked to produce. Those who work deserve to eat; those who do not work deserve to starve. There are but three ways of living: by working, by stealing, or by begging. Those who have not lived by the first have lived by one of the other two. And no matter how superior you think yourselves, you will not pass here till you have something of your own to produce. You have had your wages beforehand—ample wages, as you acknowledge yourselves. What have you to show?»

«Wages!» the speaker said: «we are not hired servants; we received no wages. What we spent was our own. All the orders we received were that we were not to do wrong. We have done no wrong. I appeal to the higher court.»

But the appeal could not be received. To all who presented themselves with empty boxes, no matter who they were, or how excellent their characters appeared to one another, there was the irrevocable answer—«No admittance, till you come better furnished.» All who were in this condition, the duke and duchess among them, were ordered to stand aside with the thieves. The duchess declared that she had given the finest parties in the season, and as it was universally agreed that they had been the most tedious, and that no one had found any pleasure there, a momentary doubt rose whether they might not have answered some useful purpose in disgusting people with such modes of entertainment; but no evidence of this was forthcoming: the world had attended them because the world had nothing else to do, and she and her guests had been alike unprofitable. Thus the large majority of the saloon passengers was disposed of. The minister, the archbishop, the lawyer, the banker, and others who although they had no material work credited to them had yet been active and laborious in their different callings, were passed to the superior judges.

Our turn came next,—ours of the second class,—and a motley gathering we were. Busy we must all have been, from the multitude of articles which we found assigned to us: manufacturers with their wares, solicitors with their law-suits, doctors and clergymen with the bodies and souls which they had saved or lost, authors with their books, painters and sculptors with their pictures and statues. But the hard test was applied to all that we had produced,—the wages which we had received on one side, and the value of our exertions to mankind on the other,—and imposing as our performances looked when laid out to be examined, we had been paid, most of us, out of all proportion to what we were found to have deserved. I was reminded of a large compartment in the Paris Exhibition, where an active gentleman, wishing to show the state of English literature, had collected copies of every book, review, pamphlet, or newspaper which had been published in a single year. The bulk was overwhelming, but the figures were only decimal points, and the worth of the whole was a fraction above zero. A few of us were turned back summarily among the thieves and the fine gentlemen and ladies: speculators who had done nothing but handle money which had clung to their fingers in passing through them, divines who had preached a morality which they did not practice, and fluent orators who had made speeches which they knew to be nonsense; philosophers who had spun out of moonshine systems of the universe, distinguished pleaders who had defeated justice while they established points of law, writers of books upon subjects of which they knew enough to mislead their readers, purveyors of luxuries which had added nothing to human health or strength, physicians and apothecaries who had pretended to knowledge which they knew that they did not possess,— these all, as the contents of their boxes bore witness against them, were thrust back into the rejected herd.

There were some whose account stood better, as having at least produced something of real merit, but they were cast on the point of wages: modest excellence had come badly off; the plausible and unscrupulous had thriven and grown rich. It was tragical, and evidently a surprise to most of us, to see how mendacious we had been: how we had sanded our sugar, watered our milk, scamped our carpentering and mason's work, literally and metaphorically; how in all things we had been thinking less of producing good work than of the profit which we could make out of it; how we had sold ourselves to tell lies and act them, because the public found lies pleasant and truth expensive and troublesome. Some of us were manifest rogues, who had bought cheap and sold dear, had used false measures and weights, had made cotton pass for wool, and hemp for silk, and tin for silver. The American peddler happened to be in the party, who had put a rind upon a grindstone and had sold it as a cheese. These were promptly sifted out and placed with their fellows; only persons whose services were on the whole greater than the pay which they had received were allowed their certificates. When my own box was opened, I perceived that though the wages had been small, the work done seemed smaller still; and I was surprised to find myself among those who had passed.

The whistle of a train was heard at this moment, coming in upon the main line. It was to go in half an hour, and those who had been turned back were told that they were to proceed by it to the place where they had been originally going. They looked infinitely relieved at the news; but before they started, a few questions had to be put to them, and a few alterations made which were to affect their future. They were asked to explain how they had come to be such worthless creatures. They gave many answers, which came mainly to the same thing. Circumstances had been against them. It was all owing to circumstances. They had been badly brought up. They had been placed in situations where it had been impossible for them to do better. The rich people repeated that they had never been informed that any work was expected of them. Their wants had all been provided for, and it was unfair to expect that they should have exerted themselves of their own accord when they had no motive for working. If they had only been born poor, all would have gone well with them. The cheating tradesman declared that the first duty of a shopkeeper, according to all received principles, was to make money and better his condition. It was the buyer's business to see to the quality of the articles which he purchased; the shopkeeper was entitled to sell his wares at the highest price which he could get for them. So, at least, it was believed and taught by the recognized authorities on the subject. The orators, preachers, newspaper writers, novel-writers, etc., etc., of whom there were a great many, appealed to the crowds who came to listen to them, or bought and read their productions. *Tout le monde*, it was said, was wiser than the wisest single sage. They had given the world what the world wished for and approved; they had worked at supplying it with all their might, and it was extremely hard to blame them for guiding themselves by the world's judgment. The thieves and vagabonds argued that they had been brought into existence without their consent being asked: they had not wished for it; although they had not been without their pleasures, they regarded existence on the whole as a nuisance which they would gladly have been spared. Being alive, however, they had to keep alive; and for all that they could see, they had as full a right to the good things which the world contained as anybody else, provided they could get them. They were called thieves. Law and language were made by the property-owners, who were their natural enemies. If society had given them the means of living honestly they would have found it easy to be honest. Society had done nothing for them — why should they do anything for society?

So, in their various ways, those who had been «plucked» defended themselves. They were all delighted to hear that they were to have another chance; and I was amused to observe that though some of them had pretended that they had not wished to be born, and had rather not have been born, not one of them protested against being sent back. All they asked was that they should be put in a new position, and that the adverse influences should be taken off. I expected that among these adverse influences they would have mentioned the faults of their own dispositions. My own opinion had been that half the misdoings of men came from congenital defects of character which they had brought with them into the world, and that constitutional courage, right-mindedness, and practical ability were as much gifts of nature or circumstance as the accidents of fortune. A change in this respect was of more consequence than in any other. But with themselves they were all apparently satisfied, and they required only an improvement in their surroundings. The alterations were rapidly made. The duchess was sent to begin her life again in a laborer's cottage. She was to attend the village school and rise thence into a housemaid. The fine gentleman was made a plowboy. The authors and preachers were to become mechanics, and bound apprentices to carpenters and blacksmiths. A philosopher who, having had a good fortune and unbroken health, had insisted that the world was as good as it could be made, was to be born blind and paralytic, and to find his way through life under the new conditions. The thieves and cheats, who pretended that their misdemeanors were due to poverty, were to find themselves, when they arrived in the world again, in palaces surrounded with luxury. The cup of Lethe was sent round. The past became a blank. They were hurried into the train; the engine screamed and flew away with them.

«They will be all here again in a few years,» the station-master said, «and it will be the same story over again. I have had these very people in my hands a dozen times. They have been tried in all positions, and there is still nothing to show, and nothing but complaints of circumstances. For my part, I would put them out altogether.» «How long is it to last?» I asked. «Well,» he said, «it does not depend on me. No one passes here who cannot prove that he has lived to some purpose. Some of the worst I have known made at last into pigs and geese, to be fatted up and eaten, and made of use that way. Others have become asses, condemned to carry burdens, to be beaten with sticks, and to breed asses like themselves for a hundred generations. All animated creatures tend to take the shape at last which suits their character.»

The train was scarcely out of sight when again the bell rang. The scene changed as at a theatre. The screen was rolled back, and we who were left found ourselves in the presence of four grave-looking persons, like the board of examiners whom we remembered at college. We were called up one by one. The work which had passed the first ordeal was again looked into, and the quality of it compared with the talent or faculty of the producer, to see how far he had done his best,—whether anywhere he had done worse than he might have done and knew how to have done; while besides, in a separate collection, were the vices, the sins, the selfishnesses and ill-humors, with — in the other scale — the acts of personal duty, of love and kindness and charity, which had increased the happiness or lightened the sorrows of those connected with him. These last, I observed, had generally been forgotten by the owner, who saw them appear with surprise, and even repudiated them with protest. In the work, of course, both material and moral, there was every gradation both of kind and merit. But while nothing was absolutely worthless, everything, even the highest achievements of the greatest artist or the greatest saint, fell short of absolute perfection. Each of us saw our own performances, from our first ignorant beginnings to what we regarded as our greatest triumph; and it was easy to trace how much of our faults were due to natural deficiencies and the necessary failures of inexperience, and how much to self-will or vanity or idleness. Some taint of mean motives, too,— some desire of reward, desire of praise or honor or wealth, some foolish self-satisfaction, when satisfaction ought not to have been felt,— was to be seen infecting everything, even the very best which was presented for scrutiny.

So plain was this that one of us, an earnest, impressive-looking person, whose own work bore inspection better than that of most of us, exclaimed passionately that so far as he was concerned the examiners might spare their labor. From his earliest years he had known what he ought to do, and in no instance had he ever completely done it. He had struggled; he had conquered his grosser faults: but the farther he had gone, and the better he had been able to do, his knowledge had still grown faster than his power of acting upon it; and every additional day that he had lived, his shortcomings had become more miserably plain to him. Even if he could have reached perfection at last, he could not undo the past, and the faults of his youth would bear witness against him and call for his condemnation. Therefore, he said, he abhorred himself. He had no merit which could entitle him to look for favor. He had labored on to the end, but he had labored with a full knowledge that the best which he could offer would be unworthy of acceptance. He had been told, and he believed, that a high Spirit not subject to infirmity had done his work for him, and done it perfectly, and that if he abandoned all claim on his own account, he might be accepted for the sake of what another had done. This, he trusted, was true, and it was his sole dependence. In the so-called good actions with which he seemed to be credited, there was nothing that was really good; there was not one which was altogether what it ought to have been.

He was evidently sincere, and what he said was undoubtedly true—true of him and true of every one. Even in the vehemence of his self-abandonment a trace lingered of the taint which he was confessing, for he was a polemical divine; he had spent his life and gained a reputation in maintaining this particular doctrine. He believed it, but he had not forgotten that he had been himself its champion.

The examiner looked kindly at him, but answered:—

«We do not expect impossibilities; and we do not blame you when you have not accomplished what is beyond your strength. Only those who are themselves perfect can do anything perfectly. Human beings are born ignorant and helpless. They bring into the world with them a disposition to seek what is pleasant to themselves, and what is pleasant is not always right. They learn to live as they learn everything else. At first they cannot do rightly at all. They improve under teaching and practice. The best only arrive at excellence. We do not find fault with the painter on account of his first bad copies, if they were as good as could be looked for at his age. Every craftsman acquires his art by degrees. He begins badly; he cannot help it; and it is the same with life. You learn to walk by falling down. You learn to live by going wrong and experiencing the consequences of it. We do not record against a man 'the sins of his youth' if he has been honestly trying to improve himself. We do not require the same self-control in a child as in a man. We do not require the same attainments from all. Some are well taught, some are ill taught, some are not taught at all. Some have naturally good dispositions, some have naturally bad dispositions. Not one has had power 'to fulfill the law,' as you call it, completely. Therefore it is no crime in him if he fails. We reckon as faults those only which arise from idleness, willfulness, selfishness, and deliberate preference of evil to good. Each is judged according to what he has received.»

I was amused to observe how pleased the archbishop looked while the examiner was speaking. He had himself been engaged in controversy with this gentleman on the share of «good works» in justifying a man; and if the examiner had not taken his side in the discussion, he had at least demolished his adversary. The archbishop had been the more disinterested in the line which he had taken, as his own «works,» though in several large folios, weighed extremely little; and indeed, had it not been for passages in his early life,—he had starved himself at college that he might not be a burden upon his widowed mother,—I do not know but that he might have been sent back into the world to serve as a parish clerk.

For myself, there were questions which I was longing to ask, and I was trying to collect my courage to speak. I wanted chiefly to know what the examiner meant by «natural disposition.» Was it that a man might be born with a natural capacity for becoming a saint, as another man with a capacity to become a great artist or musician, and that each of us could only grow to the limits of his natural powers? And again, were idleness, willfulness, selfishness, etc., etc., natural dispositions? for in that case—

But at the moment the bell rang again, and my own name was called. There was no occasion to ask who I was. In every instance the identity of the person, his history, small or large, and all that he had said or done, was placed before the court so clearly that there was no need for extorting a confession. There stood the catalogue inexorably impartial, the bad actions in a schedule painfully large, the few good actions veined with personal motives which spoilt the best of them. In the way of work there was nothing to be shown but certain books and other writings, and these were spread out to be tested. A fluid was poured on the pages, the effect of which was to obliterate entirely every untrue proposition, and to make every partially true proposition grow faint in proportion to the false element which entered into it. Alas! chapter after chapter vanished away, leaving the paper clean, as if no compositor had ever labored in setting type for it. Pale and illegible became the fine-sounding paragraphs on which I had secretly prided myself. A few passages, however, survived here and there at long intervals. They were those on which I had labored least, and had almost forgotten; or those, as I observed in one or two instances, which had been selected for special reprobation in the weekly journals. Something stood to my credit, and the worst charge, of willfully and intentionally setting down what I did not believe to be true, was not alleged against me. Ignorance, prejudice, carelessness; sins of infirmity,—culpable indeed, but not culpable in the last degree; the water in the ink, the commonplaces, the ineffectual sentiments—these, to my unspeakable comfort, I perceived were my heaviest crimes. Had I been accused of absolute worthlessness, I should have pleaded guilty in the state of humiliation to which I was reduced; but things were better than they might have been. I was flattering myself that when it came to the wages question, the balance would be in my favor: so many years of labor—such and such cheques received from my publisher. Here at least I held myself safe, and I was in good hope that I might scrape through.

The examiner was good-natured in his manner. A reviewer who had been listening for my condemnation was beginning to look disgusted, when suddenly one of the walls of the court became transparent, and there appeared an interminable vista of creatures—creatures of all kinds from land and water, reaching away into the extreme distance. They were those which in the course of my life I had devoured, either in part or whole, to sustain my unconscionable carcass. There they stood in lines with solemn and reproachful faces,—oxen and calves, sheep and lambs, deer, hares, rabbits, turkeys, ducks, chickens, pheasants, grouse, and partridges, down to the larks and sparrows and blackbirds which I had shot when a boy and made into puddings. Every one of them had come up to bear witness against their murderer; out of sea and river had come the trout and salmon, the soles and turbots, the ling and cod, the whiting and mackerel, the smelts and whitebait, the oysters, the crabs, the lobsters, the shrimps. They seemed literally to be in millions, and I had eaten them all. I talked of wages. These had been my wages. At this enormous cost had my existence been maintained. A stag spoke for the rest: "We all," he said, "were sacrificed to keep this cormorant in being, and to enable him to produce the miserable bits of printed paper which are all that he has to show for himself. Our lives were dear to us. In meadow and wood, in air and water, we wandered harmless and innocent, enjoying the pleasant sunlight, the light of heaven and the sparkling waves. We were not worth much; we have no pretensions to high qualities. If the person who stands here to answer for himself can affirm that his value in the universe was equivalent to the value of all of us who were sacrificed to feed him, we have no more to say. Let it be so pronounced. We shall look at our numbers, and we shall wonder at the judgment, though we shall withdraw our complaint. But for ourselves we say freely that we have long watched him,—him and his fellows,—and we have failed to see in what the superiority of the human creature lies. We know him only as the most cunning, the most destructive, and unhappily the longest lived of all carnivorous beasts. His delight is in killing. Even when his hunger is satisfied, he kills us for his mere amusement."

The oxen lowed approval, the sheep bleated, the birds screamed, the fishes flapped their tails. I, for myself, stood mute and self-condemned. What answer but one was possible? Had I been myself on the bench I could not have hesitated. The fatal sentence of condemnation was evidently about to be uttered, when the scene became indistinct, there was a confused noise, a change of condition, a sound of running feet and of many voices. I awoke. I was again in the railway carriage; the door was thrown open; porters entered to take our things. We stepped out upon the platform. We were at the terminus for which we had been originally destined. Carriages and cabs were waiting; tall powdered footmen flew to the assistance of the duke and duchess. The station-master was standing hat in hand, and obsequiously bowing; the minister's private secretary had come to meet his right honorable chief with the red dispatch box, knowing the impatience with which it was waited for. The duke shook hands with the archbishop before he drove away. "Dine with us to-morrow?" he said. "I have had a very singular dream. You shall be my Daniel and interpret it for me." The archbishop regretted infinitely that he must deny himself the honor; his presence was required at the Conference. "I too have dreamt," he said; "but with your Grace and me the realities of this world are too serious to leave us leisure for the freaks of imagination."

HENRY B. FULLER

(1859-)

New England blood reveals itself in certain characteristics of Mr. Henry B. Fuller's fiction, though his grandfather took root in Chicago even after its incorporation in 1840. Born in the «windy city,» of prosperous merchant stock, he is of the intellectual race of Margaret Fuller; and the saying of one of his characters, «Get the right kind of New England face, and you can't do much better,» shows his liking for the transplanted qualities which began the good fortunes of the Great West.

Family councils decreed that he should fill an important inherited place in the business world; but temperament was too strong for predestination. He might have been an architect, he might have been a musician, had he not turned out a novelist. But a creative artist he was constrained by nature to become. His first story, unacknowledged at first, and entitled 'The Chevalier of Pensieri-Vani,' attracted little notice until it fell by chance under the eye of Professor Norton of Cambridge, who sent it with a kindly word to Lowell. This fine critic wrote a cordial letter of praise to the author, and the book was republished by the Century Company of New York in 1892 and widely read. 'The Chatelaine of La Trinité,' his next venture, appeared as a serial in the Century Magazine during the same year. Both of these stories have a European background; in both a certain remoteness and romantic quality predominates, and both have little in common with this workaday world.

To the amazement of his public, Mr. Fuller's next book — published as a serial in Harper's Weekly, during the summer of the World's Fair, and called 'The Cliff-Dwellers' — pictured Chicago in its most sordid and utilitarian aspect. King Money sat on the throne, and the whole community paid tribute. The intensity of the struggle for existence, the push of competition, the relentlessness of the realism of the book, left the reader almost breathless at the end, uncertain whether to admire the force of the story-teller or to lament his mercilessness.

In 1895 appeared 'With the Procession,' another picture of Chicago social life, but painted with a more kindly touch. The artist still delineates what he sees, but he sees more truly, because more sympathetically. The theme of the story is admirable, and it is carried out with a half humorous and wholly serious thoroughness. This theme is the total reconstruction of the social concepts of an old-fashioned, rich, stolid, commercial Chicago family, in obedience to the decree of the modernized younger son and daughters. The process is more or less tragic, though it is set forth with an artistic lightness of touch. ‹With the Procession› is such a story as might happen round the corner in any year. Herr Sienkiewicz's Polanyetskis are not more genuinely «children of the soil» than Mr. Fuller's Marshalls and Bateses. In these later stories he seems to be asking himself, in most serious words, what is to be the social outcome of the great industrial civilization of the time, and to demand of his readers that they too shall fall to thinking.

AT THE HEAD OF THE MARCH

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«WELL, here goes!» said Jane half aloud, with her foot on the lowest of the glistening granite steps. The steps led up to the ponderous pillared arches of a grandiose and massive porch; above the porch a sturdy and rugged balustrade half intercepted the rough-faced glitter of a vast and variegated façade; and higher still, the morning sun shattered its beams over a tumult of angular roofs and towering chimneys.

«It *is* swell, I declare!» said Jane, with her eye on the wrought-iron work of the outer doors, and the jewels and bevels of the inner ones.

«Where is the thingamajig, anyway?» she inquired of herself. She was searching for the door-bell, and she fell back on her own rustic lingo in order to ward off the incipient panic caused by this overwhelming splendor. «Oh, here it is! There!» She gave a push. «And now I'm in for it.» She had decided to take the richest and best known and most fashionable woman on her list to start with; the worst over at the beginning, she thought, the rest would follow easily enough.

«I suppose the ‹maid› will wear a cap and a silver tray,» she observed further. «Or will it be a gold one, with diamonds around the edge?»

The door-knob turned from within. «Is Mrs. Bates —» she began.

The door opened half-way. A grave, smooth-shaven man appeared; his chin and upper lip had the mottled smudge that shows in so many of those conscientious portraits of the olden time.

«Gracious me!» said the startled Jane to herself.

She dropped her disconcerted vision to the door-mat. Then she saw that the man wore knee-breeches and black-silk stockings.

«Heaven be merciful!» was her inward cry. «It's a footman, as I live. I've been reading about them all my life, and now I've met one. But I never suspected that there was really anything of the kind in *this* town!»

She left the contemplation of the servant's pumps and stockings, and began to grapple fiercely with the catch of her handbag.

The man in the meanwhile studied her with a searching gravity, and as it seemed, with some disapproval. The splendor of the front that his master presented to the world had indeed intimidated poor Jane; but there were many others upon whom it had no deterring effect at all. Some of these brought artbooks in monthly parts; others brought polish for the piano legs. Many of them were quite as prepossessing in appearance as Jane was; some of them were much less plain and dowdy; few of them were so recklessly indiscreet as to betray themselves at the threshold by exhibiting a black leather bag.

«There!» remarked Jane to the footman, «I knew I should get at it eventually.» She smiled at him with a friendly goodwill: she acknowledged him as a human being, and she hoped to propitiate him into the concession that she herself was nothing less.

The man took her card, which was fortunately as correct as the most discreet and contemporaneous stationer could fashion. He decided that he was running no risk with his mistress, and «Miss Jane Marshall» was permitted to pass the gate.

She was ushered into a small reception-room. The hard-wood floor was partly covered by a meagre Persian rug. There was a plain sofa of forbidding angles, and a scantily upholstered chair which insisted upon nobody's remaining longer than necessary. But through the narrow door Jane caught branching vistas of room after room heaped up with the pillage of a sacked and ravaged globe, and a stairway which led with a wide sweep to regions of unimaginable glories above.

«Did you ever!» exclaimed Jane. It was of the footman that she was speaking; he in fact loomed up, to the practical eclipse of all this luxury and display. «Only eighty years from the Massacre, and hardly eight hundred feet from the Monument!»

Presently she heard a tapping and a rustling without. She thought that she might lean a few inches to one side with no risk of being detected in an impropriety, and she was rewarded by seeing the splendid vacuity of the grand stairway finally filled—filled more completely, more amply, than she could have imagined possible through the passage of one person merely. A woman of fifty or more was descending with a slow and somewhat ponderous stateliness. She wore an elaborate morning-gown with a broad plait down the back, and an immensity of superfluous material in the sleeves. Her person was broad, her bosom ample, and her voluminous gray hair was tossed and fretted about the temples after the fashion of a marquise of the old régime. Jane set her jaw and clamped her knotty fingers to the two edges of her inhospitable chair.

«I don't care if she *is* so rich,» she muttered, «and so famous, and so fashionable, and so terribly handsome; she can't bear *me* down.»

The woman reached the bottom step, and took a turn that for a moment carried her out of sight. At the same time the sound of her footsteps was silenced by one of the big rugs that covered the floor of the wide and roomy hall. But Jane had had a glimpse, and she knew with whom she was to deal: with one of the big, the broad, the great, the triumphant; with one of a Roman amplitude and vigor, an Indian keenness and sagacity, an American ambition and determination; with one who baffles circumstance and almost masters fate—with one of the conquerors, in short.

«I don't hear her,» thought the expectant girl, in some trepidation; «but all the same, she's got to cross that bare space just outside the door before—yes, there's her step! And here she is herself!»

Mrs. Bates appeared in the doorway. She had a strong nose of the lofty Roman type; her bosom heaved with breaths deep, but quiet and regular. She had a pair of large, full blue eyes, and these she now fixed on Jane with an expression of rather cold questioning.

«Miss Marshall?» Her voice was firm, smooth, even, rich, deep. She advanced a foot or two within the room and remained standing there. . . .

« My father,» Jane began again, in the same tone, «is David Marshall. He is very well known, I believe, in Chicago. We have lived here a great many years. It seems to me that there ought to — »

« David Marshall ? » repeated Mrs. Bates, gently. « Ah, I *do* know David Marshall — yes,» she said; « or did — a good many years ago.» She looked up into Jane's face now with a completely altered expression. Her glance was curious and searching, but it was very kindly. «And you are David Marshall's daughter ? » She smiled indulgently at Jane's outburst of spunk. « Really — David Marshall's daughter ? »

« Yes,» answered Jane, with a gruff brevity. She was far from ready to be placated yet.

« David Marshall's daughter ! Then, my dear child, why not have said so in the first place, without lugging in everybody and everything else you could think of ? Hasn't your father ever spoken of me ? And how is he, anyway ? I haven't seen him — to really speak to him — for fifteen years. It may be even more.»

She seemed to have laid hands on a heavy bar, to have wrenched it from its holds, to have flung it aside from the footpath, and to be inviting Jane to advance without let or hindrance.

But Jane stood there with pique in her breast, and her long thin arms laid rigid against her sides. « Let her 'dear child' me, if she wants to; she sha'n't bring me around in any such way as that.»

All this, however, availed little against Mrs. Bates's new manner. The citadel so closely sealed to charity was throwing itself wide open to memory. The portcullis was dropped, and the late enemy was invited to advance as a friend.

Nay, urged. Mrs. Bates presently seized Jane's unwilling hands. She gathered those poor, stiff, knotted fingers into two crackling bundles within her own plump and warm palms, squeezed them forcibly, and looked into Jane's face with all imaginable kindness. « I had just that temper once myself,» she said.

The sluice gates of caution and reserve were opening wide; the streams of tenderness and sympathy were bubbling and fretting to take their course.

« And your father is well ? And you are living in the same old place ? Oh, this terrible town ! You can't keep your old friends; you can hardly know your new ones. We are only a mile or two apart, and yet it is the same as if it were a hundred.»

Jane yielded up her hands half unwillingly. She could not, in spite of herself, remain completely unrelenting, but she was determined not to permit herself to be patronized. «Yes, we live in the same old place. And in the same old way,» she added — in the spirit of concession.

Mrs. Bates studied her face intently. «Do you look like him — like your father?»

«No,» answered Jane. «Not so very much. Nor like any of the rest of the family.» The statue was beginning to melt. «I'm unique.» And another drop fell.

«Don't slander yourself.» She tapped Jane lightly on the shoulder.

Jane looked at her with a protesting, or at least a questioning, seriousness. It had the usual effect of a wild stare. «I wasn't meaning to,» she said, shortly, and began to congeal again. She also shrugged her shoulder; she was not quite ready yet to be tapped and patted.

«But don't remain standing, child,» Mrs. Bates proceeded, genially. She motioned Jane back to her chair, and herself advanced to the roomier sofa. «Or no; this little pen is like a refrigerator to-day; it's so hard, every fall, to get the steam heat running as it should. Come; it ought to be warmer in the music-room.»

«The fact is,» she proceeded, as they passed through the hall, «that I have a spare hour on my hands this morning — the first in a month. My music teacher has just sent word that she is down with a cold. You shall have as much of that hour as you wish. So tell me all about your plans; I dare say I can scrape together a few pennies for Jane Marshall.»

«Her music teacher!» thought Jane. She was not yet so far appeased nor so far forgetful of her own initial awkwardness as to refrain from searching out the joints in the other's armor. «What does a woman of fifty-five want to be taking music lessons for?»

The music-room was a lofty and spacious apartment done completely in hard-woods; its paneled walls and ceilings rang with a magnificent sonority as the two pairs of feet moved across the mirror-like marquetry of the floor.

To one side stood a concert-grand; its case was so unique and so luxurious that even Jane was conscious of its having been made by special order and from a special design. Close at hand stood a tall music-stand in style to correspond. It was laden with handsomely bound scores of all the German classics and the usual operas of the French and Italian schools. These were all ranged in precise order; nothing there seemed to have been disturbed for a year past. «My! isn't it grand!» sighed Jane. She already felt herself succumbing beneath these accumulated splendors.

Mrs. Bates carelessly seated herself on the piano stool, with her back to the instrument. «I don't suppose,» she observed, casually, «that I have sat down here for a month.»

«What!» cried Jane, with a stare. «If I had such a lovely room as this I should play in it every day.»

«Dear me,» rejoined Mrs. Bates, «what pleasure could I get from practicing in this great barn of a place, that isn't half full until you've got seventy or eighty people in it? Or on this big sprawling thing?»—thrusting out her elbow backward towards the shimmering cover of the keyboard.

«So then,» said Jane to herself, «it's all for show. I knew it was. I don't believe she can play a single note.»

«What do you suppose happened to me last winter?» Mrs. Bates went on. «I had the greatest set-back of my life. I asked to join the Amateur Musical Club. They wouldn't let me in.»

«Why not?»

«Well, I played before their committee, and then the secretary wrote me a note. It was a nice enough note, of course, but I knew what it meant. I see now well enough that my fingers *were* rather stiffer than I realized, and that my 'Twinkling Sprays' and 'Fluttering Zephyrs' were not quite up to date. They wanted Grieg and Lassen and Chopin. 'Very well,' said I, 'just wait.' Now, I never knuckle under. I never give up. So I sent right out for a teacher. I practiced scales an hour a day for weeks and months. Granger thought I was crazy. I tackled Grieg and Lassen and Chopin,—yes, and Tschaikowsky, too. I'm going to play for that committee next month. Let me see if they'll dare to vote me out again!»

«Oh, *that's* it!» thought Jane. She was beginning to feel desirous of meting out exact and even-handed justice. She found it impossible to withhold respect from so much grit and determination.

« But your father liked those old-time things, and so did all the other young men.» Mrs. Bates creased and folded the end of one of her long sleeves, and seemed lapsing into a retrospective mood. «Why, some evenings they used to sit two deep around the room to hear me do the ‘Battle of Prague.’ Do you know the ‘Java March’?» she asked suddenly.

«I'm afraid not,» Jane was obliged to confess.

«Your father always had a great fondness for that. I don't know,» she went on, after a short pause, «whether you understand that your father was one of my old beaux — at least, I always counted him with the rest. I was a gay girl in my day, and I wanted to make the list as long as I could; so I counted in the quiet ones as well as the noisy ones. Your father was one of the quiet ones.»

«So I should have imagined,» said Jane. Her maiden delicacy was just a shade affrighted at the turn the talk was taking.

«When I was playing he would sit there by the hour and never say a word. My banner piece was really a fantasia on ‘Sonnambula’— a new thing here; I was the first one in town to have it. There were thirteen pages, and there was always a rush to see who should turn them. Your father didn't often enter the rush, but I really liked his way of turning the best of any. He never turned too soon or too late; he never bothered me by shifting his feet every second or two, nor by talking to me at the hard places. In fact, he was the only one who could do it right.»

«Yes,» said Jane, with an appreciative sigh; «that's pa — all over.»

Mrs. Bates was twisting her long sleeves around her wrists. Presently she shivered slightly. «Well, really,» she said, «I don't see that this place is much warmer than the other; let's try the library.»

In this room our antique and Spartan Jane was made to feel the need of yet stronger props to hold her up against the overbearing weight of latter-day magnificence. She found herself surrounded now by a sombre and solid splendor. Stamped hangings of Cordova leather lined the walls, around whose bases ran a low range of ornate bookcases, constructed with the utmost taste and skill of the cabinet-maker's art. In the centre of the room a wide and substantial table was set with all the paraphernalia of correspondence, and the leathery abysses of three or four vast easy-chairs invited the reader to bookish self-abandonment.

«How glorious!» cried Jane, as her eyes ranged over the ranks and rows of formal and costly bindings. It all seemed doubly glorious after that poor sole book-case of theirs at home — a huge black-walnut thing like a wardrobe, and with a couple of drawers at the bottom, receptacles that seemed less adapted to pamphlets than to goloshes. «How grand!» Jane was not exigent as regarded music, but her whole being went forth towards books. «Dickens and Thackeray and Bulwer and Hume and Gibbon, and Johnson's ‹Lives of the Poets,› and —»

«And twenty or thirty yards of Scott,» Mrs. Bates broke in genially; «and enough Encyclopædia Britannica to reach around the corner and back again. Sets — sets — sets.»

«What a lovely chair to sit and study in!» cried Jane, not at all abashed by her hostess's comments. «What a grand table to sit and write papers at!» Writing papers was one of Jane's chief interests.

«Oh, yes,» said Mrs. Bates with a quiet toleration, as she glanced towards the shining inkstand and the immaculate blotting-pad. «But really, I don't suppose I've written two lines at that table since it was put there. And as for all these books, Heaven only knows where the keys are to get at them with. *I* can't do anything with them; why, some of them weigh five or six pounds!»

Jane shriveled and shivered under this. She regretted doubly that she had been betrayed into such an unstinted expression of her honest interest. «All for show and display,» she muttered, as she bowed her head to search out new titles; «bought by the pound and stacked by the cord; doing nobody any good — their owners least of all.» She resolved to admire openly nothing more whatever.

Mrs. Bates sank into one of the big chairs and motioned Jane towards another. «Your father was a great reader,» she said, with a resumption of her retrospective expression. «He was very fond of books — especially poetry. He often read aloud to me; when he thought I was likely to be alone, he would bring his Shakespeare over. I believe I could give you even now, if I was put to it, Antony's address to the Romans. Yes; and almost all of Hamlet's soliloquies, too.»

Jane was preparing to make a stand against this woman; and here apparently was the opportunity. «Do you mean to tell me,» she inquired, with something approaching sternness, «that my father — *my father* — was ever fond of poetry and — and music, and — and all that sort of thing?»

«Certainly. Why not? I remember your father as a high-minded young man, with a great deal of good taste; I always thought him much above the average. And that Shakespeare of his — I recall it perfectly. It was a chubby little book bound in brown leather, with an embossed stamp, and print a great deal too fine for *my* eyes. He always had to do the reading; and he read very pleasantly.» She scanned Jane closely. «Perhaps you have never done your father justice.»

Jane felt herself driven to defense — even to apology. «The fact is,» she said, «pa is so quiet; he never says much of anything. I'm about the only one of the family who knows him very well, and I guess *I* don't know him any too well.» She felt, though, that Mrs. Bates had no right to defend her father against his own daughter; no, nor any need.

«I suppose so,» said Mrs. Bates slowly. She crossed over to the radiator and began working at the valve. «I *told* Granger I knew he'd be sorry if he didn't put in furnace flues too. I really can't ask you to take your things off down here; let's go upstairs — that's the only warm place I can think of.»

She paused in the hall. «Wouldn't you like to see the rest of the rooms before you go up?»

«Yes — I don't mind,» responded Jane. She was determined to encourage no ostentatious pride; so she made her acceptance as indifferent as she felt good manners would allow.

Mrs. Bates crossed over the hall and paused in a wide doorway. «This,» she indicated, in a tone slightly suggestive of the cicerone, «is the — well, the Grand Salon; at least, that's what the newspapers have decided to call it. Do you care anything for Louis Quinze?»

Jane found herself on the threshold of a long and glittering apartment; it was full of the ornate and complicated embellishments of the eighteenth century — an exhibition of decorative whip-cracking. Grilles, panels, mirror frames, all glimmered in green and gold, and a row of lustres, each multitudinously candled, hung from the lofty ceiling.

Jane felt herself on firmer ground here than in the library, whose general air of distinction, with no definite detail by way of guide-post, had rather baffled her.

« Hem! » she observed critically, as her eyes roamed over the spacious splendor of the place; « quite an epitome of the whole rococo period; done, too, with a French grace and a German thoroughness. Almost a real *jardin d'hiver*, in fact. Very handsome indeed. »

Mrs. Bates pricked up her ears; she had not expected quite such a response as this. « You are posted on these things, then? »

« Well, » said Jane, « I belong to an art class. We study the different periods in architecture and decoration. »

« Do you? I belong to just such a class myself — and to three or four others. I'm studying and learning right along; I never want to stand still. You were surprised, I saw, about my music lessons. It *is* a little singular, I admit — my beginning as a teacher and ending as a pupil. You know, of course, that I *was* a school-teacher? Yes, I had a little class down on Wabash Avenue near Hubbard Court, in a church basement. I began to be useful as early as I could. We lived in a little bit of a house a couple of blocks north of there; you know those old-fashioned frame cottages — one of them. In the early days pa was a carpenter — a boss carpenter, to do him full justice; the town was growing, and after a while he began to do first-rate. But at the beginning ma did her own work, and I helped her. I swept and dusted, and wiped the dishes. She taught me to sew, too; I trimmed all my own hats till long after I was married. »

Mrs. Bates leaned carelessly against the tortured framework of a tapestried *causeuse*. The light from the lofty windows shattered on the prisms of her glittering chandeliers, and diffused itself over the paneled Loves and Graces around her.

« When I got to be eighteen I thought I was old enough to branch out and do something for myself — I've always tried to hold up my own end. My little school went first-rate. There was only one drawback — another school next door, full of great rowdy boys. They would climb the fence and make faces at my scholars; yes, and sometimes they would throw stones. But that wasn't the worst: the other school taught book-keeping. Now, I never was one of the kind to lag behind, and I used to lie awake nights wondering how I could catch up with the rival institution. Well, I hustled around, and finally I got hold of two or three children who were old enough for accounts, and I set them to work on single entry. I don't know whether they learned anything, but *I* did — enough to keep Granger's books for the first year after we started out."

Jane smiled broadly; it was useless to set a stoic face against such confidences as these.

"We were married at the most fashionable church in town — right there in Court-house Square; and ma gave us a reception, or something like it, in her little front room. We weren't so very stylish ourselves, but we had some awfully stylish neighbors — all those Terrace Row people, just around the corner. 'We'll get there too, sometime,' I said to Granger. 'This is going to be a big town, and we have a good show to be big people in it. Don't let's start in life like beggars going to the back door for cold victuals; let's march right up the front steps and ring the bell *like* somebody.' So, as I say, we were married at the best church in town; we thought it safe enough to discount the future."

"Good for you," said Jane, who was finding her true self in the thick of these intimate revelations; "you guessed right."

"Well, we worked along fairly for a year or two, and finally I said to Granger: — 'Now, what's the use of inventing things and taking them to those companies and making everybody rich but yourself? You pick out some one road, and get on the inside of that, and stick there, and —' The fact is," she broke off suddenly, "you can't judge at all of this room in the daytime. You must see it lighted and filled with people. You ought to have been here at the *bal poudré* I gave last season — lots of pretty girls in laces and brocades, and powder on their hair. It was a lovely sight. . . . Come; we've had enough of this." Mrs. Bates turned a careless back upon all her Louis Quinze splendor. "The next thing will be something else."

Jane's guide passed swiftly into another large and imposing apartment. "This I call the Sala de los Embajadores; here is where I receive my distinguished guests."

"Good!" cried Jane, who knew Irving's 'Alhambra' by heart. "Only it isn't Moorish; it's Baroque — and a very good example."

The room had a heavy paneled ceiling of dark wood, with a cartouche in each panel; stacks of seventeenth-century armor stood in the corners, half a dozen large Aubusson tapestries hung on the walls, and a vast fireplace, flanked by huge Atlantes and crowned by a heavy pediment, broken and curled, almost filled one whole side. "That fireplace is Baroque all over."

« See here,» said Mrs. Bates, suddenly, « are you the woman who read about the ‹ Decadence of the Renaissance Forms › at the last Fortnightly ? »

« I'm the woman,» responded Jane modestly.

« I don't know why I didn't recognize you before. But you sat in an awfully bad light, for one thing. Besides, I had so much on my mind that day. Our dear little Reginald was coming down with something — or so we thought. And the bonnet I was forced to wear — well, it just made me blue. You didn't notice it ? »

« I was too flustered to notice anything. It was my first time there. »

« Well, it was a good paper, although I couldn't half pay attention to it; it gave me several new notions. All my decorations, then — you think them corrupt and degraded ? »

« Well,» returned Jane, at once soothing and judicial, « all these later forms are interesting from a historical and sociological point of view. And lots of people find them beautiful, too, for that matter.» Jane slid over these big words with a practiced ease.

« They impressed my notables, any way,» retorted Mrs. Bates. « We entertained a good deal during the Fair — it was expected, of course, from people of our position. We had princes and counts and honorables without end. I remember how delighted I was with my first prince — a Russian. H'm! later in the season Russian princes were as plentiful as blackberries: you stepped on one at every turn. We had some of the English too. One of their young men visited us at Geneva during the summer. I never quite made out who invited him; I have half an idea that he invited himself. He was a great trial. Queer about the English, isn't it ? How can people who are so clever and capable in practical things ever be such insolent tom-fools in social things ? Well, we might just stick our noses in the picture gallery for a minute.

« We're almost beginners in this branch of industry,» she expounded, as she stood beside Jane in the centre of the room under the coldly diffused glare of the skylight. « In my young days it was all Bierstadt and De Haas; there wasn't supposed to be anything beyond. But as soon as I began to hear about the Millet and the Barbizon crowd, I saw there was. Well, I set to work, as usual. I studied and learned. I *want* to learn. I want to move; I want to keep right up with the times and the people. I got books and photographs, and I went to all the galleries. I read the artists' biographies and took in all the loan collections. Now I'm loaning, too. Some of these things are going to the Art Institute next week — that Daubigny, for one. It's little, but it's good: there couldn't be anything more like him, could there?

« We haven't got any Millet yet, but that morning thing over there is a Corot — at least we think so. I was going to ask one of the French commissioners about it last summer, but my nerve gave out at the last minute. Mr. Bates bought it on his own responsibility. I let him go ahead; for after all, people of our position would naturally be expected to have a Corot. I don't care to tell you what he paid for it.» . . .

« There's some more high art,» said Mrs. Bates, with a wave of her hand towards the opposite wall. «Carolus Duran; fifty thousand francs; and he wouldn't let me pick out my own costume either. . . .

« And now,» she said, «let's go up-stairs.» Jane followed her, too dazed to speak or even to smile.

Mrs. Bates hastened forward light-footedly. « Conservatory — *that's* Moorish,» she indicated casually; «nothing in it but orchids and things. Come along.» Jane followed — dumbly, humbly.

Mrs. Bates paused on the lower step of her great stairway. A huge vase of Japanese bronze flanked either newel, and a Turkish lantern depended above her head. The bright green of a dwarf palm peeped over the balustrade, and a tempered light strained down through the painted window on the landing-stage.

«There!» she said, «you've seen it all.» She stood there in a kind of impassioned splendor, her jeweled fingers shut tightly, and her fists thrown out and apart so as to show the veins and cords of her wrists. «*We* did it, we two — just Granger and I. Nothing but our own hands and hearts and hopes, and each other. We have fought the fight — a fair field and no favor — and we have come out ahead. And we shall stay there too; keep up with the procession is my motto, and head it if you can. I *do* head it, and I feel that I'm where I belong. When I can't foot it with the rest, let me drop by the wayside and the crows have me. But they'll never get me — never! There's ten more good years in me yet; and if we were to slip to the bottom to-morrow we should work back to the top again before we finish. When I led the grand march at the Charity Ball I was accused of taking a vainglorious part in a vainglorious show. Well, who would look better in such a rôle than I, or who has earned a better right to play it? There, child! ain't that success? ain't that glory? ain't that poetry?—h'm," she broke off suddenly, "I'm glad Jimmy wasn't by to hear that! He's always taking up his poor mother."

"Jimmy? Is he humble-minded, do you mean?"

"Humble-minded? one of my boys humble-minded? No indeed; he's grammatical, that's all: he prefers 'isn't.' Come up."

Mrs. Bates hurried her guest over the stairway and through several halls and passages, and introduced her finally into a large and spacious room done in white and gold. In the glittering electrolier wires mingled with pipes, and bulbs with globes. To one side stood a massive brass bedstead full-panoplied in coverlet and pillow-cases, and the mirror of the dressing-case reflected a formal row of silver-backed brushes and combs.

"My bedroom," said Mrs. Bates. "How does it strike you?"

"Why," stammered Jane, "it's all very fine, but—"

"Oh, yes; I know what they say about it—I've heard them a dozen times: 'It's very big and handsome and all, but not a bit home-like. *I* shouldn't want to sleep here.' Is that the idea?"

"About," said Jane.

"Sleep here!" echoed Mrs. Bates. "I *don't* sleep here. I'd as soon think of sleeping out on the prairie. That bed isn't to *sleep* in; it's for the women to lay their hats and cloaks on. Lay yours there now."

Jane obeyed. She worked herself out of her old blue sack, and disposed it, neatly folded, on the brocaded coverlet. Then she took off her mussy little turban and placed it on the sack. "What a strange woman," she murmured to herself. "She doesn't get any music out of her piano; she doesn't get any reading out of her books; she doesn't even get any sleep out of her bed." Jane smoothed down her hair and awaited the next stage of her adventure.

"This is the way." Mrs. Bates led her through a narrow side door. . . . "This is my office." She traversed the "office," passed into a room beyond, pushed Jane ahead of her, and shut the door. . . .

The door closed with a light click, and Jane looked about her with a great and sudden surprise. Poor stupid, stumbling child! —she understood at last in what spirit she had been received and on what footing she had been placed.

She found herself in a small, cramped, low-ceiled room which was filled with worn and antiquated furniture. There was a ponderous old mahogany bureau, with the veneering cracked and peeled, and a bed to correspond. There was a shabby little writing-desk, whose let-down lid was lined with faded and blotted green baize. On the floor there was an old Brussels carpet, antique as to pattern, and wholly threadbare as to surface. The walls were covered with an old-time paper whose plaintive primitiveness ran in slender pink stripes alternating with narrow green vines. In one corner stood a small upright piano whose top was littered with loose sheets of old music, and on one wall hung a set of thin black-walnut shelves strung together with cords and loaded with a variety of well-worn volumes. In the grate was a coal fire.

Mrs. Bates sat down on the foot of the bed, and motioned Jane to a small rocker that had been re-seated with a bit of old rugging.

« And now,» she said, cheerily, « let's get to business. Sue Bates, at your service.»

« Oh, no,» gasped Jane, who felt, however dumbly and mistily, that this was an epoch in her life. « Not here; not to-day.»

« Why not? Go ahead; tell me all about the charity that isn't a charity. You'd better; this is the last room—there's nothing beyond.» Her eyes were twinkling, but immensely kind.

« I know it,» stammered Jane. « I knew it in a second.» She felt too that not a dozen persons had ever penetrated to this little chamber. « How good you are to me!»

Presently, under some compulsion, she was making an exposition of her small plan. Mrs. Bates was made to understand how some of the old Dearborn Seminary girls were trying to start a sort of club-room in some convenient down-town building for typewriters and saleswomen and others employed in business. There was to be a room where they could get lunch, or bring their own to eat, if they preferred; also a parlor where they could fill up their noon hour with talk or reading or music; it was the expectation to have a piano and a few books and magazines.

« I remembered Lottie as one of the girls who went with us there, down on old Dearborn Place, and I thought perhaps I could interest Lottie's mother,» concluded Jane.

« And so you can,» said Lottie's mother, promptly. « I'll have Miss Peters — but don't you find it a little warm here? Just pass me that hair-brush.»

Mrs. Bates had stepped to her single little window. « Isn't it a gem?» she asked. « I had it made to order; one of the old-fashioned sort, you see — two sash, with six little panes in each. No weights and cords, but simple catches at the side. It opens to just two widths; if I want anything different, I have to contrive it for myself. Sometimes I use a hair-brush and sometimes a paper-cutter.» . . .

She dropped her voice.

« Did you ever have a private secretary?»

« Me?» called Jane. « I'm my own.»

« Keep it that way,» said Mrs. Bates, impressively. « Don't ever change — no matter how many engagements and appointments and letters and dates you come to have. You'll never spend a happy day afterwards. Tutors are bad enough — but thank goodness, my boys are past that age. And men-servants are bad enough — every time I want to stir in my own house I seem to have a footman on each toe and a butler standing on my train; however, people in our position — well, Granger insists, you know.» . . .

«And now business is over,» she continued. « Do you like my posies?» She nodded towards the window where, thanks to the hair-brush, a row of flowers in a long narrow box blew about in the draft.

«Asters?»

« No, no, no! But I hoped you'd guess asters. They're chrysanthemums — you see, fashion will penetrate even here. But they're the smallest and simplest I could find. What do I care for orchids and American beauties, and all those other expensive things under glass? How much does it please me to have two great big formal beds of gladiolus and foliage in the front yard, one on each side of the steps? Still, in our position, I suppose it can't be helped. No; what I want is a bed of portulaca, and some cypress vines running up strings to the top of a pole. As soon as I get poor enough to afford it I'm going to have a lot of phlox and London-pride and bachelor's-buttons out there in the back yard, and the girls can run their clothes-lines somewhere else."

"It's hard to keep flowers in the city," said Jane.

"I know it is. At our old house we had such a nice little rose-bush in the front yard. I hated so to leave it behind — one of those little yellow brier-roses. No, it wasn't yellow; it was just — 'yaller.' And it always scratched my nose when I tried to smell it. But oh, child" — wistfully — "if I could only smell it now!"

"Couldn't you have transplanted it?" asked Jane, sympathetically.

"I went back the very next day after we moved out, with a peach basket and fire shovel. But my poor bush was buried under seven feet of yellow sand. To-day there's seven stories of brick and mortar. So all I've got from the old place is just this furniture of ma's and the wall-paper."

"The wall-paper?"

"Not the identical same, of course. It's like what I had in my bedroom when I was a girl. I remembered the pattern, and tried everywhere to match it. At first I just tried on Twenty-second street. Then I went down-town. Then I tried all the little places away out on the West Side. Then I had the pattern put down on paper and I made a tour of the country. I went to Belvidere, and to Beloit, and to Janesville, and to lots of other places between here and Geneva. And finally — "

"Well, what — finally?"

"Finally, I sent down East and had eight or ten rolls made to order. I chased harder than anybody ever chased for a Raphael, and I spent more than if I had hung the room with Gobelins; but — "

She stroked the narrow strips of pink and green with a fond hand, and cast on Jane a look which pleaded indulgence. "Isn't it just too quaintly ugly for anything?"

"It isn't any such thing," cried Jane. "It's just as sweet as it can be! I only wish mine was like it."

SARAH MARGARET FULLER

(MARCHIONESS OSSOLI)

(1810–1850)

«Margaret was one of the few persons who looked upon life as an art, and every person not merely as an artist, but as a work of art,» wrote Emerson. «She looked upon herself as a living statue, which should always stand on a polished pedestal, with right accessories, and under the most fitting lights. She would have been glad to have everybody so live and act. She was annoyed when they did not, and when they did not regard her from the point of view which alone did justice to her. . . . It is certain that her friends excused in her, because she had a right to it, a tone which they would have reckoned intolerable in any other.» In the coolest way she said to her friends:—

Margaret Fuller

«I take my natural position always: and the more I see, the more I feel that it is regal. Without throne, sceptre, or guards, still a queen. . . . In near eight years' experience I have learned as much as others would in eighty, from my great talent at explanation. . . . But in truth I have not much to say; for since I have had leisure to look at myself, I find that so far from being an original genius, I have not yet learned to think to any depth; and that the utmost I have done in life has been to form my character to a certain consistency, cultivate my tastes, and learn to tell the truth with a little better grace than I did at first. When I look at my papers I feel as if I had never had a thought that was worthy the attention of any but myself; and 'tis only when on talking with people I find I tell them what they did not know, that my confidence at all returns. . . . A woman of tact and brilliancy, like me, has an undue advantage in conversation with men. They are astonished at our instincts. They do not see where we got our knowledge; and while they tramp on in their clumsy way, we wheel and fly, and dart hither and thither, and seize with ready eye all the weak points, like Saladin in the desert. It is quite another thing when we come to write, and without suggestion from another mind, to declare the positive amount of thought that is in us. . . . Then gentlemen are surprised that I write no better, because I talk so well. I have served a long apprenticeship to the one, none to the other. I shall write better, but never, I think, so well as I talk; for then I feel inspired. . . . For all the tides of life that flow within me, I am dumb and ineffectual when it comes to casting my thought into a form. No old one suits me. If I could invent one, it seems to me the pleasure of creation would make it possible for me to write. What shall I do, dear friend? I want force to be either a genius or a character. One should be either private or public. I love best to be a woman; but womanhood is at present too straitly bounded to give me scope. At hours, I live truly as a woman; at others, I should stifle.»

All these naïve confessions were made, it must be remembered, either in her journal, or in letters to her nearest friends, and without fear of misinterpretation.

This complex, self-conscious, but able woman was born in Cambridgeport, Massachusetts, in 1810, in the house of her father, Timothy Fuller, a lawyer. Her mother, it is reported, was a mild, self-effacing lover of flower-bulbs and gardens, of a character to supplement, and never combat, a husband who exercised all the domestic dictation which Puritan habits and the marital law encouraged.

«He thought to gain time by bringing forward the intellect as early as possible,» wrote Margaret in her autobiographical sketch. «Thus I had tasks given me, as many and as various as the hours would allow, and on subjects beyond my age; with the additional disadvantage of reciting to him in the evening after he returned from his office. As he was subject to many interruptions, I was often kept up till very late, and as he was a severe teacher, both from his habits of mind and his ambition for me, my feelings were kept on the stretch till the recitations were over. Thus, frequently, I was sent to bed several hours too late, with nerves unnaturally stimulated. The conseqence was a premature development of the brain that made me a ‹youthful prodigy› by day, and by night a victim of spectral illusions, nightmare, and somnambulism, which at the time prevented the harmonious development of my bodily powers and checked my growth, while later they induced continual headache, weakness, and nervous affections of all kinds. . . . I was taught Latin and English grammar at the same time, and began to read Latin at six years old, after which, for some years, I read it daily. . . . Of the Greek language I knew only enough to feel that the sounds told the same story as the mythology; that the law of life in that land was beauty, as in Rome it was stern composure. . . . With these books I passed my days. The great amount of study exacted of me soon ceased to be a burden, and reading became a habit and a passion. The force of feeling which under other circumstances might have ripened thought, was turned to learn the thoughts of others.»

By the time she entered mature womanhood, Margaret had made herself acquainted with the masterpieces of German, French, and Italian literatures. It was later that she became familiar with the great literature of her own tongue. Her father died in 1835, and in 1836 she went to Boston to teach languages.

«I still,» wrote Emerson (1851), «remember the first half-hour of Margaret's conversation. She was then twenty-six years old. She had a face and a frame that would indicate fullness and tenacity of life. She was rather under the middle height; her complexion was fair, with strong, fair hair. She was then, as always, carefully and becomingly dressed, and of ladylike self-possession. For the rest, her appearance had nothing prepossessing. Her extreme plainness,—a trick of incessantly opening and shutting her eyelids,—the nasal tone of her voice,—all repelled; and I said to myself, ‹We shall never get far.› It is to be said that Margaret made a disagreeable first impression on most persons, including those who became afterwards her best friends, to such an extreme that they did not wish to be in the same room with her. This was partly the effect of her manners, which expressed an overweening sense of power, and slight esteem of others, and partly the prejudice of her fame. She had a dangerous reputation for satire, in addition to her great scholarship. The men thought she carried too many guns, and the women did not like one who despised them.»

In 1839 Margaret began her famous «Conversations» in Boston, continuing these for five winters. «Their theory was not high-flown but eminently sensible,» writes Mr. Higginson, «being based expressly on the ground stated in her circular; that the chief disadvantage of women in regard to study was in not being called upon, like men, to reproduce in some way what they had learned. As a substitute for this she proposed to try the uses of conversation, to be conducted in a somewhat systematic way under efficient leadership.» In 1839 she published her translation of Eckermann's ‹Conversations with Goethe,› and in 1842 of the ‹Correspondence of Fräulein Günerode and Bettine von Arnim.› The year 1839 had seen the full growth of New England transcendentalism, which was a reaction against Puritanism and a declaration in vague phrases of God in man and of the indwelling of the spirit in each soul,—an admixture of Platonism, Oriental pantheism, and the latest German idealism, with a reminiscence of the stoicism of Seneca and Epictetus. In 1840 The Dial was founded to be the expression of these ideas, with Margaret as editor and Emerson and George Ripley as aids. To this quarterly she gave two years of hard work and self-sacrifice.

Another outcome of the transcendental movement, the community of Brook Farm, was to her, says Mr. Higginson, «simply an experiment which had enlisted some of her dearest friends; and later, she found [there] a sort of cloister for occasional withdrawal from her classes and her conversations. This was all: she was not a stockholder, nor a member, nor an advocate of the enterprise; and even ‹Miss Fuller's cow,› which Hawthorne tried so hard to milk, was a being as wholly imaginary as [Hawthorne's] Zenobia.»

Her ‘Woman in the Nineteenth Century’ (1844) led Horace Greeley to offer her a place in the literary department of the New York Tribune. It is her praise that she was able to impart a purely literary interest to a daily journal, and to make its critical judgment authoritative. The best of her contributions to that journal were published, with articles from the Dial and other periodicals, under the title of ‘Papers on Art and Literature’ (1846).

In that year she paid the visit to Europe of which she had dreamed and written; and her letters to her friends at home are now, perhaps, the most readable of her remains. Taking up her residence in Italy in 1847, and sympathizing passionately with Mazzini and his republican ideas, she met and married the Marquis Giovanni Angelo Ossoli. Her husband was seven years her junior, but his letters written while he was serving as a soldier at Rome, and she was absent with their baby in the country, reveal the ardor of his love for her. During the siege of Rome by the French, Mazzini put in her charge the hospital of the Trinity of the Pilgrims. «At the very moment when Lowell was satirizing her in his ‘Fables for Critics,’» says Mr. Higginson, «she was leading such a life as no American woman had led in this century before.» Her Southern nature and her longing for action and love had found expression. In May 1850 she sailed with her husband and son from Leghorn for America. But the vessel was wrecked off Fire Island within a day's sail of home and friends, and, save the body of her child and a trunk of water-soaked papers, the sea swallowed up all remnants of the happiness of her later life.

The position which Margaret Fuller held in the small world of letters about her is not explained by her writings. She seems to have possessed great personal magnetism. She was strong, she had intellectual grasp and poise, possibly at times she had the tact she so much admired, she had unusual knowledge, and above all a keen self-consciousness. Her nature was too Southern in its passions, just as it was too large in intellectual vigor, for the environment in which she was born. She was in fact stifled until she escaped from her egotism and self-consciousness, and from the pale New England life and movement, to find a larger existence in her Italian lover and husband, and their child. And then she died.

The affectionate admiration which she aroused in her friends has found expression in three notable biographies: ‘Memoirs of Margaret Fuller Ossoli,’ by her brother; ‘Margaret Fuller Ossoli,’ by Thomas Wentworth Higginson (‘American Men of Letters Series’); and ‘Margaret Fuller (Marchesa Ossoli)’ by Julia Ward Howe (‘Eminent Women Series’).

GEORGE SAND

To Elizabeth Hoar

From ‹Memoirs›: Paris, ——, 1847

You wished to hear of George Sand, or as they say in Paris, « Madame Sand. » I find that all we had heard of her was true in the outline; I had supposed it might be exaggerated. . . .

It is the custom to go and call on those to whom you bring letters, and push yourself upon their notice; thus you must go quite ignorant whether they are disposed to be cordial. My name is always murdered by the foreign servants who announce me. I speak very bad French; only lately have I had sufficient command of it to infuse some of my natural spirit in my discourse. This has been a great trial to me, who am eloquent and free in my own tongue, to be forced to feel my thoughts struggling in vain for utterance.

The servant who admitted me was in the picturesque costume of a peasant, and as Madame Sand afterwards told me, her goddaughter, whom she had brought from her province. She announced me as « Madame Salère, » and returned into the anteroom to tell me, « Madame says she does not know you. » I began to think I was doomed to rebuff among the crowd who deserve it. However, to make assurance sure, I said, « Ask if she has received a letter from me. » As I spoke Madame Sand opened the door, and stood looking at me an instant. Our eyes met. I never shall forget her look at that moment. The doorway made a frame for her figure; she is large but well formed. She was dressed in a robe of dark-violet silk, with a black mantle on her shoulders, her beautiful hair dressed with the greatest taste; her whole appearance and attitude, in its simple and ladylike dignity, presented an almost ludicrous contrast to the vulgar caricature idea of George Sand. Her face is a very little like the portraits, but much finer; the upper part of the forehead and eyes are beautiful, the lower strong and masculine, expressive of a hardy temperament and strong passions, but not in the least coarse; the complexion olive, and the air of the whole head Spanish (as indeed she was born at Madrid, and is only on one side of French blood). All these I saw at a glance; but what fixed my attention was the expression of *goodness*, nobleness, and power that pervaded the whole,—the truly human heart and nature that shone in the eyes. As our eyes met, she said, «C'est vous,» and held out her hand. I took it, and went into her little study; we sat down a moment; then I said, «Il me fait de bien de vous voir,» and I am sure I said it with my whole heart, for it made me very happy to see such a woman, so large and so developed in character, and everything that *is* good in it so *really* good. I loved, shall always love her.

She looked away, and said, «Ah! vous m'avez écrit une lettre charmante.» This was all the preliminary of our talk, which then went on as if we had always known one another. . . . Her way of talking is just like her writing,—lively, picturesque, with an undertone of deep feeling, and the same happiness in striking the nail on the head every now and then with a blow. . . . I heartily enjoyed the sense of so rich, so prolific, so ardent a genius. I liked the woman in her, too, very much; I never liked a woman better. . . . For the rest, she holds her place in the literary and social world of France like a man, and seems full of energy and courage in it. I suppose she has suffered much, but she has also enjoyed and done much.

AMERICANS ABROAD IN EUROPE

From ‹At Home and Abroad›

The American in Europe, if a thinking mind, can only become more American. In some respects it is a great pleasure to be here. Although we have an independent political existence, our position toward Europe as to literature and the arts is still that of a colony, and one feels the same joy here that is experienced by the colonist in returning to the parent home. What was but picture to us becomes reality; remote allusions and derivations trouble no more; we see the pattern of the stuff, and understand the whole tapestry. There is a gradual clearing up on many points, and many baseless notions and crude fancies are dropped. Even the post-haste passage of the business American through the great cities, escorted by cheating couriers and ignorant *valets de place*, unable to hold intercourse with the natives of the country, and passing all his leisure hours with his countrymen, who know no more than himself, clears his mind of some mistakes,—lifts some mists from his horizon.

There are three species: First, the servile American,—a being utterly shallow, thoughtless, worthless. He comes abroad to spend his money and indulge his tastes. His object in Europe is to have fashionable clothes, good foreign cookery, to know some titled persons, and furnish himself with coffee-house gossip, by retailing which among those less traveled and as uninformed as himself he can win importance at home. I look with unspeakable contempt on this class,—a class which has all the thoughtlessness and partiality of the exclusive classes in Europe, without any of their refinement, or the chivalric feeling which still sparkles among them here and there. However, though these willing serfs in a free age do some little hurt, and cause some annoyance at present, they cannot continue long; our country is fated to a grand independent existence, and as its laws develop, these parasites of a bygone period must wither and drop away.

Then there is the conceited American, instinctively bristling and proud of—he knows not what. He does not see, not he! that the history of humanity, for many centuries, is likely to have produced results it requires some training, some devotion, to appreciate and profit by. With his great clumsy hands, only fitted to work on a steam-engine, he seizes the old Cremona violin, makes it shriek with anguish in his grasp, and then declares he thought it was all humbug before he came, and now he knows it; that there is not really any music in these old things; that the frogs in one of our swamps make much finer, for they are young and alive. To him the etiquettes of courts and camps, the ritual of the Church, seem simply silly,—and no wonder, profoundly ignorant as he is of their origin and meaning. Just so the legends which are the subjects of pictures, the profound myths which are represented in the antique marbles, amaze and revolt him; as, indeed, such things need to be judged of by another standard than that of the Connecticut Blue Laws. He criticizes severely pictures, feeling quite sure that his natural senses are better means of judgment than the rules of connoisseurs,—not feeling that to see such objects mental vision as well as fleshly eyes are needed, and that something is aimed at in art beyond the imitation of the commonest forms of nature. This is Jonathan in the sprawling state, the booby truant, not yet aspiring enough to be a good schoolboy. Yet in his folly there is a meaning; add thought and culture to his independence, and he will be a man of might: he is not a creature without hope, like the thick-skinned dandy of the class first specified.

The artists form a class by themselves. Yet among them, though seeking special aims by special means, may also be found the lineaments of these two classes, as well as of the third, of which I am now to speak.

This is that of the thinking American,—a man who, recognizing the immense advantage of being born to a new world and on a virgin soil, yet does not wish one seed from the past to be lost. He is anxious to gather and carry back with him every plant that will bear a new climate and new culture. Some will dwindle; others will attain a bloom and stature unknown before. He wishes to gather them clean, free from noxious insects, and to give them a fair trial in his new world. And that he may know the conditions under which he may best place them in that new world, he does not neglect to study their history in this.

The history of our planet in some moments seems so painfully mean and little,—such terrible bafflings and failures to compensate some brilliant successes; such a crushing of the mass of men beneath the feet of a few, and these too often the least worthy; such a small drop of honey to each cup of gall, and in many cases so mingled that it is never one moment in life purely tasted; above all, so little achieved for humanity as a whole, such tides of war and pestilence intervening to blot out the traces of each triumph,—that no wonder if the strongest soul sometimes pauses aghast; no wonder if the many indolently console themselves with gross joys and frivolous prizes. Yes! those men *are* worthy of admiration, who can carry this cross faithfully through fifty years; it is a great while for all the agonies that beset a lover of good, a lover of men; it makes a soul worthy of a speedier ascent, a more productive ministry in the next sphere. Blessed are they who ever keep that portion of pure, generous love with which they began life! How blessed those who have deepened the fountains, and have enough to spare for the thirst of others! Some such there are; and feeling that, with all the excuses for failure, still only the sight of those who triumph gives a meaning to life or makes its pangs endurable, we must arise and follow.

A CHARACTER SKETCH OF CARLYLE

Letter to R. W. Emerson

From ‹Memoirs›: Paris, ——, 1846

I ENJOYED the time extremely [in London]. I find myself much in my element in European society. It does not indeed come up to my ideal, but so many of the incumbrances are cleared away that used to weary me in America, that I can enjoy a freer play of faculty, and feel, if not like a bird in the air, at least as easy as a fish in water. . . .

Of the people I saw in London, you will wish me to speak first of the Carlyles. Mr. Carlyle came to see me at once, and appointed an evening to be passed at their house. That first time I was delighted with him. He was in a very sweet humor,—full of wit and pathos, without being overbearing or oppressive. I was quite carried away with the rich flow of his discourse; and the hearty, noble earnestness of his personal being brought back the charm which once was upon his writing, before I wearied of it. I admired his Scotch, his way of singing his great full sentences, so that each one was like the stanza of a narrative ballad. He let me talk, now and then, enough to free my lungs and change my position, so that I did not get tired. That evening he talked of the present state of things in England, giving light, witty sketches of the men of the day, fanatics and others, and some sweet, homely stories he told of things he had known of the Scotch peasantry. Of you he spoke with hearty kindness; and he told with beautiful feeling a story of some poor farmer or artisan in the country, who on Sunday lays aside the cark and care of that dirty English world, and sits reading the ‹Essays› and looking upon the sea. . . .

The second time, Mr. Carlyle had a dinner party, at which was a witty, French, flippant sort of a man, named Lewes, author of a ‹History of Philosophy,› and now writing a life of Goethe, a task for which he must be as unfit as irreligion and sparkling shallowness can make him. But he told stories admirably, and was allowed sometimes to interrupt Carlyle a little,—of which one was glad, for that night he was in his acrid mood; and though much more brilliant than on the former evening, grew wearisome to me, who disclaimed and rejected almost everything he said. . . .

Accustomed to the infinite wit and exuberant richness of his writings, his talk is still an amazement and a splendor scarcely to be faced with steady eyes. He does not converse, only harangues. It is the usual misfortune of such marked men,—happily not one invariable or inevitable,—that they cannot allow other minds room to breathe and show themselves in their atmosphere, and thus miss the refreshment and instruction which the greatest never cease to need from the experience of the humblest. Carlyle allows no one a chance, but bears down all opposition, not only by his wit and onset of words, resistless in their sharpness as so many bayonets, but by actual physical superiority,—raising his voice and rushing on his opponent with a torrent of sound. This is not in the least from unwillingness to allow freedom to others. On the contrary, no man would more enjoy a manly resistance in his thoughts. But it is the impulse of a mind accustomed to follow out its own impulse, as the hawk its prey, and which knows not how to stop in the chase.

Carlyle indeed is arrogant and overbearing; but in his arrogance there is no littleness, no self-love. It is the heroic arrogance of some old Scandinavian conqueror; it is his nature, and the untamable impulse that has given him power to crush the dragons. He sings rather than talks. He pours upon you a kind of satirical, heroical, critical poem, with regular cadences, and generally catching up, near the beginning, some singular epithet which serves as a *refrain* when his song is full, or with which, as with a knitting-needle, he catches up the stitches, if he has chanced now and then to let fall a row. For the higher kinds of poetry he has no sense, and his talk on that subject is delightfully and gorgeously absurd. He sometimes stops a minute to laugh at it himself, then begins anew with fresh vigor; for all the spirits he is driving before him as Fata Morgana, ugly masks, in fact, if he can but make them turn about; but he laughs that they seem to others such dainty Ariels. His talk, like his books, is full of pictures; his critical strokes masterly. Allow for his point of view, and his survey is admirable. He is a large subject. I cannot speak more or wiselier of him now, nor needs it; his works are true, to blame and praise him,—the Siegfried of England, great and powerful, if not quite invulnerable, and of a might rather to destroy evil than legislate for good.

THOMAS FULLER

(1608–1661)

The fragrance which surrounds the writings of Thomas Fuller seems blended of his wit, his quaint worldliness, his sweet and happy spirit. The after-glow of the dazzling day of Shakespeare and his brotherhood rests upon the pages of this divine. In Fuller the world-spirit of the Elizabethan dramatists becomes urbanity, the mellow humor of the dweller in the town. Too well satisfied with the kindly comforts of life to agonize over humanity and the eternal problems of existence, Fuller, although a Church of England clergyman, was no less a cavalier at heart than the most jaunty follower of King Charles. He had not the intensity of nature which characterizes the theologian by the grace of God. His ‹Holy and Profane State,› his ‹Good Thoughts in Bad Times,› and ‹Good Thoughts in Worse Times,› evidence a comfortable and reasonable reliance on the Unseen; but they will not be read for their spiritual insight so much as for their well-seasoned and delightful English. That quaint and fragrant style of his lends charm even to those passages in which his thought is commonplace.

THOMAS FULLER

It is in Thomas Fuller the historian and biographer, that posterity recognizes a man of marked intellectual power. His scholarship is exhibited in such a work as the ‹Church History of Britain›; his peculiar faculty for happy description in the ‹Worthies of England.› Fuller was fitted by temperament and training to be a recorder of his own country and countrymen. His life was spent upon his island; his love was fastened upon its places and its people. Born the same year as Milton, 1608, the son of a clergyman of the same name as his own, he was from boyhood both a scholar and an observer of men and things. His education at Cambridge fostered his love of books.

His subsequent incumbency of various comfortable livings afforded him opportunities for close acquaintance with the English world of his day, and especially with its «gentry.» By birth, education, and inclination, Fuller was an aristocrat. During the civil war he took the side of King Charles, to whose stately life and mournful death he has devoted the last volume of his great work, the ‹History of the Church of Britain.› Under the Protectorate, the genial priest and man of the world found himself in an alien atmosphere. Like many others in Anglican orders, he was «silenced» by the sour Puritan authorities, but was permitted to preach again in London by the grace of Cromwell. He was subsequently appointed chaplain to Charles II., but did not live long after the Restoration, dying of a fever in 1661.

An early instance of modern scholarship is found in the histories written by Thomas Fuller. Being by nature an antiquarian, he was not inclined to find his material at second hand. He went back always to the earliest sources for his historical data. It is this fact which gives their permanent value to the ‹History of the Church of Britain› and to the ‹History of the Holy War.› These works bear witness to wide and patient research, to a thorough sifting of material. The antiquarian spirit displayed in them loses some of its scholarly dignity, and takes on the social humor of the gossip, in the ‹Worthies of England.› Fuller's other writings may be of more intrinsic value, but it is through the ‹Worthies› that he is remembered and loved. The book is rich in charm. It is as quaint as an ancient flower garden, where blooms of every sort grow in lavish tangle. He considers the counties of England, one by one, telling of their physical characteristics, of their legends, of their proverbs, of the princely children born in them, of the other «Worthies»—scholars, soldiers, and saints—who have shed lustre upon them. Fuller gathered his material for this variegated record from every quarter of his beloved little island. As a chaplain in the Cavalier army, he had many opportunities of visiting places and studying their people. As an incumbent of country parishes, he would listen to the ramblings of the old women of the hamlets, for the sake of discovering in their talk some tradition of the country-side, or some quaint bit of folk-lore. He writes of the strange, gay, sad lives of princely families as familiarly as he writes of the villagers and townsfolk. Sometimes an exquisite tenderness lies like light upon his record, as in this, of the little Princess Anne, daughter to Charles I.:—

> SHE was a very pregnant lady above her years, and died in her infancy, when not fully four years old. Being minded by those about her to call upon God even when the pangs of death were upon her, «I am not able,» saith she, «to say my long prayer» (meaning the Lord's Prayer), «but I will say my short one, ‹Lighten mine eyes, O Lord, lest I sleep the sleep of death.›» This done, the little lamb gave up the ghost.

Because of passages like these, Thomas Fuller will always be numbered among those writers who, irrespective of their rank in the world of letters, awaken a deep and lasting affection in the hearts of their readers.

THE KING'S CHILDREN

From 'The Worthies of England'

Katherine, fourth daughter to Charles the First and Queen Mary, was born at Whitehall (the Queen mother then being at St. James), and survived not above half an hour after her baptizing; so that it is charity to mention her, whose memory is likely to be lost, so short her continuance in this life,—the rather because her name is not entered, as it ought, into the register of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields; as indeed none of the King's children, save Prince Charles, though they were born in that parish. And hereupon a story depends.

I am credibly informed that at the birth of every child of kings born at Whitehall or St. James's, full five pounds were ever faithfully paid to some unfaithful receivers thereof, to record the names of such children in the register of St. Martin's. But the money being embezzled (we know by some, God knows by whom), no memorial is entered of them. Sad that bounty should betray any to baseness, and that which was intended to make them the more solemnly remembered should occasion that they should be more silently forgotten! Say not, «Let the children of mean persons be written down in registers: kings' children are registers to themselves;» or, «All England is a register to them;» for sure I am, this common confidence hath been the cause that we have been so often at a loss about the nativities and other properties of those of royal extraction.

A LEARNED LADY

From 'The Worthies of England'

Margaret More.—Excuse me, reader, for placing a lady among men and learned statesmen. The reason is because of her unfeigned affection to her father, from whom she would not willingly be parted (and from me shall not be), either living or dead.

She was born in Bucklersburie in London at her father's house therein, and attained to that skill in all learning and languages that she became the miracle of her age. Foreigners took such notice thereof that Erasmus hath dedicated some epistles unto her. No woman that could speak so well did speak so little; whose secrecy was such, that her father intrusted her with his most important affairs.

Such was her skill in the Fathers that she corrected a depraved place in Cyprian; for where it was corruptly written "Nisi vos sinceritas" she amended it "Nervos sinceritas." Yea, she translated Eusebius out of Greek; but it was never printed, because J. Christopherson had done it so exactly before.

She was married to William Roper of Eltham in Kent, Esquire, one of a bountiful heart and plentiful estate. When her father's head was set up on London Bridge, it being suspected it would be cast into the Thames to make room for divers others (then suffering for denying the King's supremacy), she bought the head and kept it for a relic (which some called affection, others religion, others superstition in her), for which she was questioned before the Council, and for some short time imprisoned until she had buried it; and how long she herself survived afterwards is to me unknown.

HENRY DE ESSEX, STANDARD-BEARER TO HENRY II.

From 'The Worthies of England'

It happened in the reign of this King, there was a fierce battle fought in Flintshire in Coleshall, between the English and Welsh, wherein this Henry de Essex, *animum et signum simul abjecit*,— betwixt traitor and coward,— cast away both his courage and banner together, occasioning a great overthrow of English. But he that had the baseness to do, had the boldness to deny, the doing of so foul a fact, until he was challenged in combat by Robert de Momford, a knight, eye-witness thereof, and by him overcome in a duel. Whereupon his large inheritance was confiscated to the King, and he himself, partly thrust, partly going, into a convent, hid his head in a cowl, under which, between shame and sanctity, he blushed out the remainder of his life.

THE GOOD SCHOOLMASTER

From ‹The Holy and Profane State›

There is scarcely any profession in the commonwealth more necessary, which is so slightly performed. The reasons whereof I conceive to be these: First, young scholars make this calling their refuge; yea, perchance before they have taken any degree in the university, commence schoolmasters in the country, as if nothing else were required to set up this profession but only a rod and a ferula. Secondly, others who are able use it only as a passage to better preferment, to patch the rents in their present fortune, till they can provide a new one and betake themselves to some more gainful calling. Thirdly, they are disheartened from doing their best with the miserable reward which in some places they receive, being masters to their children and slaves to their parents. Fourthly, being grown rich, they grow negligent, and scorn to touch the school but by the proxy of the usher. But see how well our schoolmaster behaves himself. . . .

He studieth his scholars' natures as carefully as they were books, and ranks their dispositions into several forms. And though it may seem difficult for him in a great school to descend to all particulars, yet experienced schoolmasters may quickly make a grammar of boys' natures, and reduce them all — saving some few exceptions — to these general rules: —

1. Those that are ingenious and industrious. The conjunction of two such planets in a youth presages much good unto him. To such a lad a frown may be a whipping, and a whipping a death; yea, where their master whips them once, shame whips them all the week after. Such natures he useth with all gentleness.

2. Those that are ingenious and idle. These think, with the hare in the fable, that running with snails — so they count the rest of their schoolfellows — they shall come soon enough to the post, though sleeping a good while before their starting. Oh! a good rod would finely take them napping!

3. Those that are dull and diligent. Wines, the stronger they be, the more lees they have when they are new. Many boys are muddy-headed till they be clarified with age, and such

afterwards prove the best. Bristol diamonds are both bright, and squared, and pointed by nature, and yet are soft and worthless; whereas Orient ones in India are rough and rugged naturally. Hard, rugged, and dull natures of youth acquit themselves afterwards the jewels of the country, and therefore their dullness at first is to be borne with if they be diligent. The schoolmaster deserves to be beaten himself, who beats Nature in a boy for a fault. And I question whether all the whipping in the world can make their parts, which are naturally sluggish, rise one minute before the hour Nature hath appointed.

4. Those that are invincibly dull, and negligent also. Correction may reform the latter, not amend the former. All the whetting in the world can never set a razor's edge on that which hath no steel in it. Such boys he consigneth over to other professions. Shipwrights and boat-makers will choose those crooked pieces of timber which other carpenters refuse. Those may make excellent merchants and mechanics who will not serve for scholars.

He is able, diligent, and methodical in his teaching; not leading them rather in a circle than forwards. He minces his precepts for children to swallow, hanging clogs on the nimbleness of his own soul, that his scholars may go along with him.

ON BOOKS

From ‹The Holy and Profane State›

It is a vanity to persuade the world one hath much learning by getting a great library. As soon shall I believe every one is valiant that hath a well-furnished armory. I guess good housekeeping by the smoking, not the number of the tunnels, as knowing that many of them — built merely for uniformity — are without chimneys, and more without fires.

Some books are only cursorily to be tasted of: namely, first, voluminous books, the task of a man's life to read them over; secondly, auxiliary books, only to be repaired to on occasions; thirdly, such as are mere pieces of formality, so that if you look on them you look through them, and he that peeps through the casement of the index sees as much as if he were in the house. But the laziness of those cannot be excused who perfunctorily pass over authors of consequence, and only trade in their tables and contents. These, like city cheaters, having gotten the names of all country gentlemen, make silly people believe they have long lived in those places where they never were, and flourish with skill in those authors they never seriously studied.

LONDON

From ‹The Worthies of England›

It is the second city in Christendom for greatness, and the first for good government. There is no civilized part of the world but it has heard thereof, though many with this mistake: that they conceive London to be the country and England but the city therein.

Some have suspected the declining of the lustre thereof, because of late it vergeth so much westward, increasing in buildings, Covent Garden, etc. But by their favor (to disprove their fear) it will be found to burnish round about with new structures daily added thereunto.

It oweth its greatness under God's divine providence to the well-conditioned river of Thames, which doth not (as some tyrant rivers of Europe) abuse its strength in a destructive way, but employeth its greatness in goodness, to be beneficial to commerce, by the reciprocation of the tide therein. Hence it was that when King James, offended with the city, threatened to remove his court to another place, the Lord Mayor (boldly enough) returned that «he might remove his court at his pleasure, but could not remove the river Thames.»

Erasmus will have London so called from Lindus, a city of Rhodes; averring a great resemblance betwixt the languages and customs of the Britons and Grecians. But Mr. Camden (who no doubt knew of it) honoreth not this his etymology with the least mention thereof. As improbable in my apprehension is the deduction from Lud's-Town,—town being a Saxon, not British termination; and that it was so termed from Lan Dian, a temple of Diana (standing where now St. Paul's doth), is most likely in my opinion.

MISCELLANEOUS SAYINGS

It is dangerous to gather flowers that grow on the banks of the pit of hell, for fear of falling in; yea, they which play with the Devil's rattles will be brought by degrees to wield his sword; and from making of sport they come to doing of mischief.

A public office is a guest which receives the best usage from them who never invited it.

Scoff not at the natural defects of any, which are not in their power to amend. Oh! 'tis cruel to beat a cripple with his own crutches.

Learning has gained most by those books by which the printers have lost.

Moderation is the silken string running through the pearl chain of all virtues.

To smell to a turf of fresh earth is wholesome for the body; no less are thoughts of mortality cordial to the soul.

The lion is not so fierce as painted.

. . . Their heads sometimes so little that there is no room for wit; sometimes so long that there is no wit for so much room.

Often the cock-loft is empty in those whom nature hath built many stories high.

The Pyramids themselves, doting with age, have forgotten the names of their founders.

. . . One that will not plead that cause wherein his tongue must be confuted by his conscience.

But our captain counts the image of God — nevertheless his image — cut in ebony as if done in ivory; and in the blackest Moors he sees the representation of the King of Heaven.

ÉMILE GABORIAU

(1835–1873)

To speak of the detective novel is to speak of Gaboriau. He cannot be called the father of it; but the French novelist made his field so peculiarly his own, developed its type of human nature so painstakingly, created so distinctive a reputation associated with it, that it is doubtful whether any one can be said to have outrivaled him.

Born at Saujon, in the Department of the Charente-Inférieure, in 1835, Gaboriau drifted from school into the cavalry service; then into three or four less picturesque methods of keeping body and soul together; and finally, by a kind of literary accident, he became the private secretary of the Parisian novelist Paul Féval. His first successful story ran as a continued one in a journal called Le Pays. It was 'The Lerouge Affair,' but it did not even under newspaper circumstances find any considerable favor until it caught the eye of the astute Millaud, the founder of the Petit Journal. Millaud recognized in the fiction a new note in detective-novel making. He transferred it to another journal, Le Soleil. There it made an instant and tremendous success.

From that moment Gaboriau's career was determined and fortunate. In rapid succession followed 'The Crime of Orcival' (1867); 'File No. 113' (1867); the elaborate 'Slaves of Paris' (1869); 'M. Lecoq' (1869),—in which title appears the name of the moving spirit of almost all the other stories; 'The Infernal Life' (1870); and four or five others. All these stories have been translated into almost every modern language that has a reading public. They brought Gaboriau a large income during his lifetime, and they are still valuable literary properties. Their author died in Paris, his health broken in consequence of incessant overwork, in September 1873.

Gaboriau elevated the detective story to something like a superior plane in popular fiction. It is a question whether he did not say in a large measure the strongest word in it, and to all intents and purposes the last word. His books all have a certain resemblance, in that we start into a complex drama with a riddle of crime. The unfolding always brings us sooner or later to a dramatic family secret, of which the original crime has only been an outside detail. The secret is the mainspring of the book, and about the middle of it the reader finds himself chiefly absorbed by it. Indeed, Gaboriau's novels have often been spoken of as «told backward.» Most of the novels too gain their movement from one source — the wonderful shrewdness and audacity of a certain M. Lecoq of the Paris detective service. M. Lecoq was really an exaggeration of the well-known and wonderfully able Paris detective, M. Vidocq; and there are dozens of episodes in the course of Vidocq's brilliant professional career which Gaboriau did not dress up so very much in introducing them into his stories. There is an individuality to each novel, in spite of the family likeness. Occasionally, like Dickens, the author attacked abuses with effect; as in 'The Infernal Life' and 'The Slaves of Paris,' and other books where he has set forth the merciless system of private blackmailing in Paris with little exaggeration.

As to literary manner, Gaboriau was not a writer of the first order, even as a French popular novelist. But he knew how to write; and there is a correctness of diction and a nervous vivacity that is much to his credit, considering the rapidity with which he produced his work, and the fact that he had no sufficient early training for his profession. He is seldom slipshod, and he is never really negligent. He has been criticized for making his dénouements too simple, if one regards them as a whole process; but his details are full of variety, and the reader of Gaboriau never is troubled to keep his attention on the author's pages, even in the case of those stories that are not of the first class among his works. Perhaps the best of all the novels is one of the shorter ones, 'File No. 113.'

THE IMPOSTOR AND THE BANKER'S WIFE: THE ROBBERY

From 'File No. 113'

Raoul Spencer, supposed to be Raoul de Clameran, began to triumph over his instincts of revolt. He ran to the door and rang the bell. It opened.

«Is my aunt at home?» he asked the footman.

«Madame is alone in the boudoir next her room,» replied the servant.

Raoul ascended.

Clameran had said to Raoul, «Above all, be careful about your entrance; your appearance must express everything, and thus you will avoid impossible explanations.»

The suggestion was useless.

When Raoul entered the little reception-room, his pale face and wild eyes frightened Madame Fauvel, who cried:—

« Raoul! What has happened to you? »

The sound of her gentle voice produced upon the young vagrant the effect of an electric shock. He trembled from head to foot: yet his mind was clear; Louis had not been mistaken in him. Raoul continued his rôle as if on the stage, and as assurance came to him his knavery crushed his better nature.

« Mother, the misfortune which has come to me, » he replied, « is the last one. »

Madame Fauvel had never seen him like this. Trembling with emotion, she rose and stood before him, with her tender face near his. She fixed in a steady gaze the power of her will, as if she meant to read the depths of his soul.

« What is it? » she insisted. « Raoul, my son, tell me. »

He pushed her gently away.

« What has happened, » he replied in a choked voice which pierced the heart of Madame Fauvel, « proves that I am unworthy of you, unworthy of my noble and generous father. »

She moved her head in protestation.

« Ah! » he continued, « I know and judge myself. No one could reproach my own infamous conduct so cruelly as my own conscience. I was not born wicked, but I am a miserable fool. I have hours when, as if in a vertigo, I do not know what I am doing. Ah! I should not have been like this, mother, if you had been with me in my childhood. But brought up among strangers, and left to myself without any guides but my own instincts, I am at the mercy of my own passions. Possessing nothing, not even my stolen name, I am vain and devoured by ambition. Poor and without resources but your help, I have the tastes and vices of a millionaire's son. Alas! when I recovered you, the harm was done. Your affection, your maternal tenderness which have given me my only days of happiness, could not save me. I who have suffered so much, who have endured so many privations, who have known hunger, have been spoiled by this new luxury with which you have surrounded me. I threw myself into pleasure as a drunkard rushes for the strong drink of which he has been deprived. »

Raoul expressed himself with such intense conviction and assurance that Madame Fauvel did not interrupt.

Mute and terrified, she dared not question him, fearful of learning some horrible news.

He however continued:—« Yes, I have been a fool. Happiness has passed by me, and I did not know enough to stretch out my hand to take it. I have rejected an exquisite reality for the pursuit of a phantom. I, who should have spent my life by your side and sought constantly for new proofs of my love and gratitude, I, a dark shadow, give you a cruel stab, cause you sorrow, and render you the most unfortunate of beings. Ah! what a brute I have been! For the sake of a creature whom I should despise, I have thrown to the wind a fortune whose every piece of gold has cost you a tear! With you lies happiness. I know it too late.»

He stopped, overcome by the thought of his evil conduct, ready to burst into tears.

« It is never too late to repent, my son,» murmured Madame Fauvel, « and redeem your wrong.»

« Ah, if I could!» cried Raoul; « but no, it is too late. Who knows how long my good resolutions will last? It is not only to-day that I have condemned myself without pity. Seized by remorse at each new failure, I have sworn to regain my self-respect. Alas! to what has my periodical repentance amounted? At the first new temptation I forget my remorse and my oaths. You consider me a man: I am only an unstable child. I am weak and cowardly, and you are not strong enough to dominate my weakness and control my vacillating character. I have the best intentions in the world, yet my actions are those of a scoundrel. The gap between my position and my nature is too wide for me to reconcile them. Who knows where my deplorable character may lead me?»

He gave a gesture expressing recklessness, and added, « I myself will bring justice upon myself.»

Madame Fauvel was too deeply agitated to follow Raoul's sudden moods.

« Speak!» she cried; « explain yourself. Am I not your mother? You must tell me the truth; I must hear all.»

He appeared to hesitate, as if he feared to give so terrible a shock to his mother. Finally, in a hollow voice he said, « I am ruined!»

« Ruined!»

« Yes, and I have nothing more to wait for nor to hope for. I am dishonored, and through my own fault, my own grievous fault!»

« Raoul!»

«It is true. But fear not, mother; I will not drag the name that you bestowed upon me in the dirt. I have the vulgar courage not to survive my dishonor. Go, waste no sympathy on me. I am one of those creatures of destiny who have no refuge save death. I am the victim of fate. Have you not been forced to deny my birth? Did not the memory of me haunt you and deprive your nights of sleep? And now, having found you, in exchange for your devotion I bring into your life a bitter curse.»

«Ungrateful child! Have I ever reproached you?»

«Never. And therefore with your blessing, and with your loved name on his lips, your Raoul will—die!»

«Die? You?»

«Yes, mother: honor bids it. I am condemned by inexorable judges—my will and my conscience.»

An hour earlier Madame Fauvel would have sworn that Raoul had made her suffer all that a woman could endure; and now he had brought her a new grief so acute that the former ones seemed naught in comparison.

«What have you done?» she stammered.

«Money was intrusted to me. I played, and lost it.»

«Was it a large amount?»

«No, but neither you nor I can replace it. Poor mother, have I not taken everything from you? Haven't you given me your last jewel?»

«But M. De Clameran is rich; he has put his fortune at my disposal. I will order the carriage and go to him.»

«M. De Clameran, mother, is absent for eight days; and I must have the money to-night, or I am lost. Go! I have thought of everything before deciding. But one loves life at twenty!»

He drew a pistol half out of his pocket, saying with a grim smile, «This will arrange everything.»

Madame Fauvel was too unnerved in reflecting upon the horror of the conduct of the supposed Raoul de Clameran to fancy that this last wild menace was but a means for obtaining money.

Forgetting the past, ignoring the future, and concentrating her thought on the present situation, she saw but one thing—that her son was about to kill himself, and that she was powerless to arrest his suicide.

«Wait, wait,» she said; «André will soon return, and I will tell him that I have need of— How much did you lose?»

« Thirty thousand francs. »

« You shall have them to-morrow. »

« I must have them to-night. »

She seemed to be going mad; she wrung her hands in despair.

« To-night! » she said: « why didn't you come sooner? Do you lack confidence in me? To-night there is no one to open the safe — without that — »

The expectant Raoul caught the word. He gave an exclamation of joy, as if a light had broken upon his dark despair.

« The safe! » he cried; « do you know where the key is? »

« Yes, it is here. »

« Thank heaven! »

He looked at Madame Fauvel with such a demoniacal glance that she dropped her eyes.

« Give it to me, mother, » he entreated.

« Miserable boy! »

« It is life that I ask of you. »

This prayer decided her. Taking a candle, she stepped quickly into her room, opened the writing-desk, and there found M. Fauvel's own key.

But as she was handing it to Raoul, reason returned.

« No, » she murmured; « no, it is impossible. »

He did not insist, and indeed seemed willing to retire.

« Ah, well! » he said. « Then, my mother, one last kiss. »

She stopped him: — « What will you do with the key, Raoul? Have you also the secret word? »

« No, but I can try. »

« You know there is never money in the safe. »

« Let us try. If I open it by a miracle, and if there is money in the box, then I shall believe that God has taken pity upon us. »

« And if you do not succeed? Then will you swear that you will wait until to-morrow? »

« Upon the memory of my father, I swear it. »

« Then here is the key! Come. » . . .

They had now reached Prosper's office, and Raoul had placed the lamp on a high shelf, from which point it lighted the entire room. He had recovered all of his self-possession, or rather that peculiar mechanical precision of action which seems to be independent of the will, and which men accustomed to peril always find at their service in times of pressing need. Rapidly, and with the dexterity of experience, he placed the five buttons of the iron box upon the letters forming the name g,y,p,s,y. His expression during this short performance was one of intense anxiety. He began to fear that the excited energy which he had summoned might fail him, and also that if he did open the box he might not find the hoped-for sum. Prosper might have changed the letters, and he might have been sent to the bank that day.

Madame Fauvel watched Raoul with pathetic distress. She read in his wild eyes that despair of the unfortunate, who so passionately desire a result that they fancy their unassisted will can overcome all obstacles.

Being intimate with Prosper, and having frequently watched him close the office, Raoul knew perfectly well — indeed, he had made it a study and attempted it himself, for he was a far-seeing youth — how to manipulate the key in the lock.

He inserted it gently, turned it, pushed it in deeper, and turned it again, then he pushed it in with a violent shock and turned it once more. His heart beat so loudly that Madame Fauvel could hear it.

The word had not been changed: the box opened.

Raoul and his mother uttered cries — hers of terror, his of triumph.

« Shut it! » screamed Madame Fauvel, frightened at this inexplicable and incomprehensible result; « leave it — come! »

And half mad, she threw herself upon Raoul, clinging to his arm in desperation and drawing him to her with such violence that the key was dragged from the lock and along the door of the coffer, leaving a long and deep mark.

But Raoul had had time to notice upon the upper shelf of the box three bundles of bank-notes. These he quickly snatched with his left hand, slipped them under his coat and placed them between his waistcoat and shirt.

Exhausted by her efforts, and yielding to the violence of her emotions, Madame Fauvel dropped Raoul's arm, and to avoid falling, supported herself on the back of Prosper's arm-chair.

« I implore you, Raoul, » she said, « I beseech you to put those bank-notes back in the box. I shall have money to-morrow, I swear it to you a hundred times over, and I will give it to you, my son. I beg you to take pity on your mother! »

He paid no attention to her. He was examining the long scratch on the door. This mark of the theft was very convincing and disturbing.

« At least,» implored Madame Fauvel, « don't take all. Keep what you need to save yourself, and leave the rest.»

« What for? Would a balance make discovery less easy?»

« Yes, because I — you see I can manage it. Let me arrange it! I can find an explanation! I will tell André that I needed money —»

With precaution, Raoul closed the safe.

« Come,» he said to his mother, « let us leave, so that we may not be suspected. One of the servants might go to the drawing-room and be surprised not to find us there.»

His cruel indifference and cold calculation at such a moment filled Madame Fauvel with indignation. Yet she still hoped that she might influence her son. She still believed in the power of her entreaties and tears.

« Ah me!» she said, « it might be as well! If they discover us, I care little or nothing. We are lost! André will drive me from the house, a miserable creature. But at least, I will not sacrifice the innocent. To-morrow Prosper will be accused. Clameran has taken from him the woman he loves, and you, now you will rob him of his honor. I will not.»

She spoke so loud and with such a penetrating voice that Raoul was alarmed. He knew that the office clerk slept in an adjoining room. Although it was not late, he might have gone to bed; and if so, he could hear every word.

« Let us go,» he said, seizing Madame Fauvel by the arm.

But she resisted, and clung to a table, the better to resist.

« I have been a coward to sacrifice Madeleine,» she said quietly. « I will not sacrifice Prosper!»

Raoul knew of a victorious argument which would break Madame Fauvel's resolution.

«Ah!» he cried with a cynical laugh; « you do not know, then, that Prosper and I are in league, and that he shares my fate.»

« That is impossible.»

« What do you think? Do you imagine that it was chance which gave me the secret word and opened the box?»

« Prosper is honest.»

« Of course, and so am I. But — we need the money.»

« You speak falsely!»

«No, dear mother. Madeleine left Prosper, and—well, bless me! he has tried to console himself, the poor fellow; and such consolations are expensive.»

He had lifted the lamp; and gently but with much force pushed Madame Fauvel towards the staircase.

She seemed to be more dumbfounded than when she saw the open safe.

«What,» she said, «Prosper a thief?»

She asked herself if she were not the victim of a terrible nightmare; if an awakening would not rid her of this unspeakable torture. She could not control her thoughts, and mechanically, supported by Raoul, she placed her foot on the narrow stairs.

«The key must be returned to the writing-desk,» said Raoul, when they reached the bedroom.

She appeared not to hear, and it was Raoul who replaced the key in the box from which he had seen her take it.

He then led or rather carried Madame Fauvel to the little drawing-room where he had found her upon his arrival, and placed her in an easy-chair. The utter prostration of this unhappy woman, her fixed eyes, and her loss of expression, revealed only too well the agony of her mind. Raoul, frightened, asked if she had gone mad?

«Come, mother dear,» he said, as he tried to warm her icy hands, «come to yourself. You have saved my life, and we have both rendered a great service to Prosper. Fear nothing: all will come straight. Prosper will be accused, perhaps arrested. He expects that; but he will deny it, and as his guilt cannot be proved, he will be released.»

But his lies and his efforts were lost upon Madame Fauvel, who was too distracted to hear them.

«Raoul,» she murmured, «my son, you have killed me!»

Her voice was so impressive in its sorrow, her tone was so tender in its despair, that Raoul was affected, and even decided to restore the stolen money. But the thought of Clameran returned.

Then, noticing that Madame Fauvel remained in her chair, bewildered and as still as death, trembling at the thought that M. Fauvel or Madeleine might enter at any moment, he pressed a kiss upon his mother's forehead—and fled.

Translated for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature.›

M. LECOQ'S SYSTEM

From 'File No. 113'

In the centre of a large and curiously furnished room, half library and half actor's study, was seated at a desk the same person wearing gold spectacles who had said at the police station to the accused cashier Prosper Bertomy, «Take courage!» This was M. Lecoq in his official character.

Upon the entrance of Fanferlot, who advanced respectfully, curving his backbone as he bowed, M. Lecoq slightly lifted his head and laid down his pen, saying, «Ah! you have come at last, my boy! Well, you don't seem to be progressing with the Bertomy case.»

«Why, really,» stammered Fanferlot, «you know—»

«I know that you have muddled everything, until you are so blinded that you are ready to give over.»

«But master, it was not I—»

M. Lecoq had arisen and was pacing the floor. Suddenly he stopped before Fanferlot, nicknamed «the Squirrel.»

«What do you think, Master Squirrel,» he asked in a hard and ironical tone, «of a man who abuses the confidence of those who employ him, who reveals enough of what he has discovered to make the evidence misleading, and who betrays for the benefit of his foolish vanity the cause of justice—and an unhappy prisoner?»

The frightened Fanferlot recoiled a step.

«I should say,» he began, «I should say—»

«You think this man should be punished and dismissed; and you are right. The less a profession is honored, the more honorable should be those who follow it. You however are treacherous. Ah! Master Squirrel, we are ambitious, and we try to play the police in our own way! We let Justice wander where she will, while we search for other things. It takes a more cunning bloodhound than you, my boy, to hunt without a hunter and at his own risk.»

«But master, I swear—»

«Be silent. Do you wish me to prove that you have told everything to the examining magistrate, as was your duty? Go to! While others were charging the cashier, *you* informed against the banker! *You* watched him; you became intimate with his *valet de chambre!*»

Was M. Lecoq really in anger? Fanferlot, who knew him well, doubted it a little; but with this devil of a man one never quite knew how to take him.

« If you were only clever,» he continued, « but no! You wish to be a master, and you are not even a good workman.»

« You are right, master,» said Fanferlot piteously, who could deny no longer. « But how could I work upon a business like this, when there was no trace, no mark, no sign, no conviction, — nothing, nothing?»

M. Lecoq raised his shoulders.

« Poor boy!» he said. « Know, then, that the day when you were summoned with the commissary to verify the robbery, you had — I will not say certainly but very probably — between your two large and stupid hands the means of knowing which key, the banker's or the cashier's, had been used in committing the theft.»

« What an idea!»

« You want proof? Very well. Do you remember that mark which you observed on the side of the copper? It struck you, for you did not repress an exclamation when you saw it. You examined it carefully with a glass; and you were convinced that it was quite fresh, and therefore made recently. You said, and with reason, that this mark dated from the moment of the theft. But with what had it been made? With a key, evidently. That being the case, you should have demanded the keys of the banker and the cashier, and examined them attentively. One of these would have shown some atoms of the green paint with which a strong-box is usually coated.»

Fanferlot listened with open mouth to this explanation. At the last words, he slapped his forehead violently, and cried — of himself —« Imbecile!»

« You are right,» replied M. Lecoq — « imbecile. What! With such a guide before your eyes, you neglected it and drew no conclusion! This is the one clue to the affair. If I find the guilty one, it will be by means of this mark,— and I will find him; I am determined to do it.»

When away from Lecoq, Fanferlot, nicknamed the Squirrel, often slandered and defied him; but in his presence he yielded to the magnetic influence which this extraordinary man exercised upon all who came near him.

Such exact information and such minute details perplexed his mind. Where and how could M. Lecoq have gathered them?

« You have been studying the case, master? »

« Probably. But as I am not infallible, I may have let some valuable point escape me. Sit down, and tell me all that you know. »

One could not prevaricate with M. Lecoq. Therefore Fanferlot told the exact truth,—which was not his custom. However, before the end of his recital, his vanity prevented him from telling how he had been tricked by Mademoiselle Nina Gypsy and the stout gentleman.

Unfortunately, M. Lecoq was never informed by halves.

« It seems to me, Master Squirrel, » he said, « that you have forgotten something. How far did you follow the empty cab? »

Fanferlot, despite his assurance, blushed to his ears, and dropped his eyes like a schoolboy caught in a guilty act.

« O patron, » he stammered, « you know that too? How could you have — »

Suddenly a thought flashed through his brain: he stopped, and bounding from his chair, cried, « Oh, I am sure — that stout gentleman with the red whiskers was you! »

Fanferlot's surprise gave such a ridiculous expression to his face that M. Lecoq could not help smiling.

« Then it *was* you, » continued the amazed detective, « it was you, that fat man at whom I stared. I did not recognize you! Ah, patron, what an actor you would make if you pleased! And *I* was disguised also! »

« But very poorly, my poor boy, I tell you for your own good. Do you think a heavy beard and a blouse sufficient to evade detection? But the eye, stupid fellow, the eye! It is the eye that must be changed. There is the secret. »

This theory of disguise explains why the official, lynx-like Lecoq never appeared at the police office without his gold spectacles.

« But then, patron, » continued Fanferlot, working out the idea, « you have made the little girl confess, although Madame Alexandre failed? You know then why she left 'The Grand-Archange'; why she did not wait for M. Louis de Clameran; and why she bought calico dresses for herself? »

« She never acts without my instructions. »

« In this case, » said the detective, greatly discouraged, « there is nothing more for me to do except acknowledge myself a fool. »

«No, Squirrel,» replied M. Lecoq with kindness; «no, you are not a fool; you are simply wrong in undertaking a task beyond your powers. Have you made one progressive step since you began this case? No. This only proves that you are incomparable as a lieutenant, but that you have not the *sang-froid* of a general. I will give you an aphorism; keep it, and make it a rule of conduct—'Some men may shine in the second who are eclipsed in the first rank.'» . . .

Egotist, like all great artists, M. Lecoq had never had, nor did he wish to have, a pupil. He worked alone. He despised assistants; for he did not wish to share the pleasures of triumph nor the bitterness of defeat.

Therefore Fanferlot, who knew his patron so well, was astonished to hear him, who had heretofore given nothing but orders, helping him with counsel.

He was so mystified that he could not help showing his surprise.

«It seems to me, patron,» he risked saying, «that you take a strong personal interest in this case, that you study it so closely.»

M. Lecoq started nervously,—which motion escaped his detective,—and then, frowning, he said in a hard voice:—

«It is your nature to be curious, Master Squirrel; but take care that you do not go too far. Do you understand?»

Fanferlot began to offer excuses.

«Enough! Enough!» interrupted M. Lecoq. «If I lend you a helping hand, it is because I wish to. I wish to be the head while you are the arm. Alone, with your preconceived ideas, you never would find the guilty one. If we two do not find him together, then I am not M. Lecoq.»

«We shall succeed, if you make it your business.»

«Yes, I am entangled in it, and during four days I have learned many things. However, keep this quiet. I have reasons for not being known in this case. Whatever happens, I forbid you to mention my name. If we succeed, the success must be given to you. And above all, do not seek explanations. Be satisfied with what I tell you.»

These charges seemed to fill Fanferlot with confidence.

«I will be discreet, patron,» he promised.

«I depend upon you, my boy. To begin: Carry this photograph of the strong box to the examining magistrate. M. Patrigent, I know, is as perplexed as possible upon the subject of the prisoner. You must explain, as if it were your own discovery, what I have just shown you. When you repeat all this to him with these indications, I am sure he will release the cashier. Prosper Bertomy, the accused cashier, must be free before I begin my work."

"I understand, patron. But shall I let M. Patrigent see that I suspect another than the banker or the cashier?"

"Certainly. Justice demands that you follow up the case. M. Patrigent will charge you to watch Prosper; reply that you will not lose sight of him. I assure you that he will be in good hands."

"And if he asks news of — Mademoiselle Gypsy?"

M. Lecoq hesitated for a moment.

"You will say to him," he said finally, "that you have decided, in the interest of Prosper, to place her in a house where she can watch some one whom you suspect."

The joyous Fanferlot rolled the photograph, took his hat, and prepared to leave. M. Lecoq detained him by a gesture: — "I have not finished," he said. "Do you know how to drive a carriage and take care of a horse?"

"Why, patron, you ask me that — an old rider of the Bouthor Circus?"

"Very well. As soon as the judge has dismissed you, return home, and prepare a wig and livery of a *valet de chambre* of the first class; and having dressed, go with this letter to the Agency on the Rue Delorme."

"But, patron —"

"There are no 'buts,' my boy; for this agent will send you to M. Louis de Clameran, who needs a new *valet de chambre*, his own having left yesterday evening."

"Excuse me if I dare say that you are deceived. Clameran will not agree to the conditions: he is no friend of the cashier."

"How you always interrupt me," said M. Lecoq, in his most imperative tones. "Do only what I tell you, and let everything else alone. M. Clameran is not a friend to Prosper. I know that. But he is the friend and protector of Raoul de Lagors. Why? Who can explain the intimacy of these two men of such different ages? We must know this. We must also know who *is* M. Louis de Clameran — this forge-master who lives in Paris and never goes to his own factories! A jolly dog who has taken it into his head to live at the Hôtel du Louvre and who mingles in the whirling crowd, is difficult to watch. Through you, I shall have my eye on him. He has a carriage; you will drive it; and in the easiest way you will know his acquaintances, and be able to give me an account of his slightest proceedings."

"You shall be obeyed, patron."

"Still another word. M. De Clameran is very irritable and suspicious. You will be introduced to him as Joseph Dubois. He will ask for your recommendations. Here are three, showing that you have served the Marquis de Sairmeuse, the Count de Commarin, and your last place — the house of the Baron de Wortschen, who has just gone to Germany. Keep your eyes open, be correct, and watch his movements. Serve well, but without excess of manner. But don't be too cringing, for that would arouse suspicion."

"Make yourself easy, patron: now, where shall I report?"

"I will come to see you every day. Until you have an order, don't step inside of this house: you might be followed. If anything unforeseen occurs, send a dispatch to your wife, and she will advise me. Now go; and be prudent."

The door shut behind Fanferlot, and M. Lecoq passed quickly into his bedroom.

In the twinkling of an eye he stripped off all traces of the official detective chief,— the starched cravat, the gold spectacles, and the wig, which when removed released the thick black hair.

The official Lecoq disappeared; the true Lecoq remained, a person that no one knew,— a handsome young man with brilliant eyes and a resolute manner.

Only a moment was he visible. Seated before a dressing-table, on which were spread a greater array of paints, essences, rouge, cosmetics, and false hair than is required for a modern belle, he began to substitute a new face for the one accorded him by nature.

He worked slowly, handling his little brushes with extreme care, and in about an hour had achieved one of his periodical masterpieces. When he had finished, he was no longer Lecoq: he was the stout gentleman with the red whiskers, not recognized by Fanferlot.

"There," he exclaimed, giving a last glance in the mirror, "I have forgotten nothing; I have left nothing to chance. All my threads are tied, and I can progress. I hope the Squirrel will not lose time."

But Fanferlot was too joyous to squander a moment. He did not run,— he flew along the way toward the Palais de Justice and M. Patrigent the judge.

At last he had the opportunity of demonstrating his own superior perspicacity.

It never occurred to him that he was striving to triumph through the ideas of another man. The greater part of the world is content to strut, like the jackdaw, in peacock's feathers.

The result did not blight his hopes. If M. Patrigent was not altogether convinced, he at least admired the ingenuity of the proceeding.

« This is what I will do," he said in dismissing Fanferlot: « I will present a favorable report to the council chamber, and to-morrow, most likely, the cashier will be released."

Immediately he began to write one of those terrible decisions of « Not Proven," which restores liberty to the accused man, but not honor; which says that he is not guilty, but which does not declare him innocent: —

« Whereas, against the prisoner Prosper Bertomy sufficient charges do not exist, in accordance with Article 128 of the Criminal Code, we declare there are no grounds at present for prosecution against the aforesaid prisoner: we therefore order that he be released from the prison where he is now detained, and set at liberty by the jailer," etc.

When this was finished, M. Patrigent remarked to his registrar Sigault: — « Here is one of those mysterious crimes which baffle justice! This is another file to be added to the archives of the record office." And with his own hand he wrote upon the outside the official number, «*File No. 113.*"

Translated for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature.›

BÉNITO PEREZ GALDÓS

(1845–)

BY WILLIAM HENRY BISHOP

I

The contemporary school of Spanish fiction dates from about the revolution of 1868, which drove out Isabel II. and brought in a more liberal form of government. Without this revolution, it would scarcely have found opportunity for the free expression of opinion and the bold critical tone towards ancient institutions which are among its leading characteristics. It is a fresh stirring of the human intellect, a distinctly new product, and a valuable contribution to the world's literature. It has affiliation with the Russian, the English, and other vital modern movements in fiction, and yet it can by no means be confused with that of any other country. Its method is realistic; but one of its leading figures, De Pereda, a strong delineator of rural life, protests, as to him and his works, against the use of the word,—«if,» he says vigorously, «it means to rank me under the triumphal French banner of foul-smelling realism.» That is to say, they consider the best material for fiction to be the better and sweeter part of life and its higher aspirations, and not that coarse part of it to which the French would seem to have devoted an undue amount of attention. The reader of Anglo-Saxon origin approaches this fiction with ease and sympathy; he has not to acquire any new point of view in order to understand it, nor to unlearn any wonted standards of taste or morals.

An informing Spanish critic, Emilia Pardo Bazan, herself a novelist of talent, points out that the present Spanish school cannot be said to have a «yesterday,» but only «a day before yesterday.» She means that it has skipped a certain interval, and connects itself with remoter, and not with recent, tradition. It really comes down from a time antedating even the great «Golden Age.» It takes its rise in the wonderful naturalness of the ‹Celestina,› a quaint «tragi-comedy» of the year 1499. It bears a close relationship, next, to Don Quixote and to the «Novelas Picarescas,» the stories of amusing knaves in very low life, of which ‹Lazarillo de Tormes› and ‹Guzman de Alfarache› are the best examples, and that French imitation, ‹Gil

Blas,' better than the originals. A period of very stiff Classicism in the eighteenth century, and of extravagant Romanticism in the beginning of the nineteenth, followed, constituting the omitted «yesterday»; and then arrived the vigorous literature of the present time, here in question. The qualities of truth to nature, practical good sense, genuine humor, and play of imagination, have nearly always characterized Spanish fiction, and these qualities seem possessed by the contemporary novelists in a higher degree than ever before. The Picaresque or Rogue stories seem to be—their naturalness admitted—a mere string of disconnected adventures, written to the taste of a period that had not the habit of keeping its attention fixed upon anything long; and we scarcely know any leading character more intimately at the end than at the beginning. As against this, we have now complete and lengthy novels, in which situations and characters are all worked out upon a symmetrical plan, and in which the conclusions generally follow like those of fate; that is to say, they are not arbitrary, but inevitably result from the conditions and circumstances given.

So far as there is English influence in this literature, it may be said to be more in the form of example than as a direct component. It has given the Spanish movement courage and persistence, to see the same ideals elsewhere affording profit and pleasure to millions of men. Otherwise it is a mere coloring, a superficial trace. In particular, Pérez Galdós is fond of introducing English characters. Some of them have the Dickens-like trait of a beaming, exuberant benevolence, and the athletic parson in 'Gloria' who risks his life pulling out to the rescue of a wrecked steamer is like Barrie's Little Minister. Many of his leading characters are of that mixed blood, at Cadiz and elsewhere in the South, where one parent is English and the other Spanish, and the offspring have had the advantage of an education in England. He admires English types and ways, and yet with a reluctance too; which brings it about that they are generally introduced subject to considerable satire and mockery. English steadiness and thrift,—yes, very well; but he has a lingering tenderness still for Spanish levity and improvidence. In 'Halma,' all the Marquis de Feramor's children have English names, as «Sandy» (*Alexandrito*), «Frank» (*Paquito*), and «Kitty» (*Catalanita*). The Marquis has been a student at Cambridge, and he imports into his career in Spanish politics the thorough study of the question at issue, the conservative temper and abhorrence of extremes, and the correct «good form» of some finished English statesman. These ideas of English policy and conservatism are talked over again, in the *tertulias* of the amusing family in 'El Amigo Manso,' who have come back wealthy from Cuba, the head of the household with the purpose of going into Parliament and securing a title. The English and the Spanish literary movements may be said to accompany each other amicably, much as Wellington's red-coats and the Spanish troops marched side by side in the War of Independence, which has left a feeling of friendship between the two nations ever since.

At the head of the school of fiction in question are four writers, namely, José María de Pereda, Armando Palacio Valdés, Benito Pérez Galdós, and Juan Valera. They may be considered, in their various ways, as of well-nigh equal merit; each one has some very distinguished and distinguishing quality, in virtue of which he cannot justly be rated below the others. De Pereda occupies a position apart in devoting himself wholly to the lives of humble people, the mountaineers and fishermen of the Biscayan Provinces. He never willingly departs from these scenes either in his literary or personal excursions; he has his home among them, near Santander. Valera stands apart in a different way, and would occupy himself by preference with the opposite class of society. He is the most learned and scholarly of the quartette, and his writing is the most carefully polished in style. He is a scholarly critic and essayist as well as a novelist. He is a realist like the rest, yet eschews, for instance, the imitation of dialect: he is not a realist in quite the same energetic and conscientious way; his atmosphere, while no doubt equally true, is rather dreamy and poetic. Valdés and Galdós are much more vividly modern, and they treat many of the same kind of subjects, the events of real life such as we see it all around us. Of the four, Valdés has perhaps, in certain passages, the truest tenderness and most delicate pathos, and the most genuine humor, of that sunny kind which allows us to laugh without bitterness. He can sometimes be bitter too, and such a severe social satire as 'Froth' and such books as 'The Grandee' and 'The Origin of Thought' leave, like many of those of Galdós, an impression of gloom; yet even in these we are charmed on the way by his light touch and easy grace of treatment. Galdós is he who takes the gravest attitude; many great problems of life and destiny occupy him seriously; he not only is very earnest, but seems so,—which does not however preclude a plentiful use of humor, as will be seen in the examples given. Furthermore, he is much the most prolific of the distinguished group, and to that extent he may be said to have the widest range.

These writers are a highly beneficent influence in Spain at the present time, spreading over it as they do a multitude of stimulating pictures and liberalizing ideas, cast into charming literary form. They cannot fail to have a considerable effect upon conduct. In its manner, its aversion to obscurity, and fondness for floods of daylight that almost abolish shadow, this fiction is like the Spanish-Roman school of art, the painting of Fortuny, the two Madrazos, and others: the two seem but manifestations of a common impulse. On another side it is to be recommended to foreigners, as affording a body of information about Spain such as the mere traveler could never attain, and which it is useless to look for in fiction depending for its interest upon clever devices of plot and fantastic adventure. It lets an illumination into the heart of what has been the most reserved and mysterious country of Europe. It shows the true Spain, and not merely the conventional one of strumming guitars and jingling mule bells. With all its strangeness, we see it full of that genuine human nature that makes the world akin; and we see, with pleasure and hope, the breaking up of the forces of mediævalism, the working of a mental and moral turmoil that is preparing the way for a general betterment.

It would not be reasonable to suppose that Spanish literature remained wholly unaffected by the vigorous French movement just across the border. On the contrary, it clearly shows the trace of the robust modern style that has prevailed in France from Balzac to Zola. This trace, however, is in the style and not in the matter. It may possibly have aided the plainness of speech in the Spanish work, which is greater than in English books; and yet this plainness of speech is probably not greater than all books should be allowed, in the interest of their own usefulness, and in order not to be narrow instead of broad pictures of life. The tone towards sexual problems is never flippant; immorality is never put in an attractive light; there is hardly anywhere a more severe homily on the text that «the wages of sin is death» than is found in the wretched career of the transgressors in such books as Galdós's 'Lo Prohibido,' 'Tormento,' and 'La Desheredada.'

Just as in English books, the young girl, her aspirations and her innocent love affairs before marriage, figure largely in these novels. It is not necessary for her to wait until she is married in order to become a suitable heroine for fiction. Religious revolt or dissent, again, is one of the features most often used. There is still a very close union of Church and State in Spain, and life has a very ecclesiastical coloring. Nearly every family has ties of relationship or intimacy with some ecclesiastical person of either sex. This brings it about that such figures are as frequent in books as, correspondingly, in real life. In Valera's 'Pepita Ximenez' we find an earnest young student, a candidate for the priesthood, son of a noble house, turned aside from his holy career — through his father's connivance — by the fascinations of a most charming woman, their neighbor. In Valdés's 'Sister San Sulpicio' it is a young novice, a delightfully gay and bright creature, whom love and matrimony withdraw from her convent. In the same author's 'Marta y Maria' a fair young girl is seen endeavoring to conform in the midst of modern life to the ascetic ideals of the mediæval saints, even to the point of wearing haircloth and beating her tender shoulders with a scourge. Galdós's ‘Doña Perfecta’ and ‘The Family of Leon Roch’ combat the undue influence of the confessor, or religious adviser, in the family, and ‘Gloria’ combats the immemorial bitter prejudice against the Jews. As may be seen, many of these subjects, if approached in a flippant way, might easily lend themselves to grossness and scandal; but such is not the Spanish spirit. The tone towards the Church is severely critical, but not destructive. It is the true secular tone of this century, which holds that a conventional attention to the things of the next world is only due when all demands for benevolence towards living men are satisfied. Howells points out that Galdós attacks only the same intolerant eccelesiastical spirit that elsewhere would be known by another name. These critics would «reform the party from within»; and as they handle with so much skill and consideration the sensibilities of their countrymen who still adhere to the fold, their efforts are the more likely to have a potent effect. It seems a curious anomaly that Pereda, the one of them who is the most modern and stirring in the intellectual way, professes himself the champion of monarchy in its most absolute form.

The beginnings of the present fiction are somewhat feebly found in Antonio de Trueba, and Madame Böhl de Faber, who signed herself «Fernan Caballero,»— one of the first of those who took a man's name, after the fashion of George Sand. These first wrote of other things than the romantic knights and castles, Moors and odalisques, of Scott and Victor Hugo. Fernan Caballero (1797 to 1877), a genial optimist who wrote idealized descriptions of nature, still has a certain vogue. Perez Escrich produced a large number of novels of a humanitarian cast; Fernandez y Gonzalez poured them out, of a cheap order, in a torrent, and became the very type of hasty production. Pedro de Alarcon figures as a kind of link uniting the earlier period to the present, and such a book as his ‘El Sombrero de Tres Picos’ (The Three-Cornered Hat) is said to be read by some of the present generation with admiration. But it seems to others a trifle, of no great merit, marred by an excessive straining after effect; nothing in it is simply or naturally said. Students of the more realistic side of the movement should read Madame Pardo Bazan's valuable critical study, ‘La Cuestion Palpitante’ (The Vital Question). Various books by the leading authors named have been well translated into English by Clara Bell, Mrs. Mary J. Serrano, Mary Springer, Rollo Ogden, Nathan Haskell Dole, and others.

II

Benito Pérez Galdós was born May 10th, 1845, in the Canary Islands. Las Palmas, his birthplace, capital of the Grand Canary, is a well-built little town of about eighteen thousand people, and the island is the most fertile of the group. In climate and situation the islands belong rather to Africa than Europe. The people are considered descendants of the Gothic inhabitants of Spain, who sought refuge there from the Saracen invasion. Their existence was all but lost to sight for some centuries, and they were only brought under European sway about the time of the discovery of America. These Fortunate Islands, the somewhat unusual scene where Galdós was born and passed his youth, would seem to offer a fresh literary field, yet no word of description or reminiscence concerning them appears in any of his books. This is perhaps part of the policy of reserve that induces him to deny, even by implication, any biographical details concerning himself,—a reserve so marked as to have been generally noted as an eccentricity. Leopoldo Alas, his biographer, in the 'Celebridades Españolas Contemporaneás,' assures us that it was only with the greatest difficulty he drew from him the bare admission that he was born in the Canary Islands. He made his studies there in the State college, and came to Madrid at the age of eighteen to study law. He had no great liking for it, and did not follow it further, unless as it became a step for entrance into political life, for he has been a deputy in the National Cortes, for Porto Rico. He did not acquire skill in forensic eloquence; his biographer, above, states that he cannot put four words together in public, nor in private either. A reticent man, he is forced to write in order to find expression.

He wrote his first book in 1867 and '68, but it was not published till 1871. In the mean time the revolution of 1868 took place, which enlarged the boundaries of freedom in literature as in many other directions; and Galdós at Barcelona had some small part in it. The book was 'La Fontana de Oro' (The Fount of Gold). It treats of the aspirations of the «ardent youth» of 1820, who rebelled against the reactionary policy brought in by Ferdinand VII. after the expulsion of the French from the country; and in the student hero Lázaro he perhaps displays his own ideas at the period. Violent political clubs were formed, on the model of the Jacobin Clubs of the French Revolution, and it is from the name of a café that was the meeting-place of the most famous of these clubs that the name of the story is derived. His next book was 'El Audaz' (The Fearless: 1872). The period is the same. The hero is an utterly fearless young radical, who has been driven to revolt through wrongs done his family by the Count de Cerezuelo. By a peculiar hazard, though far below her in social station, he meets the daughter of the count, a very proud and disdainful beauty. It is her caprice to fall in love with him, and she remains true to him to the end, when he dies in a street tumult, having first gone mad with his superheated enthusiasm. These early books are conceived upon conventional romantic lines, and hardly gave promise of their author's future fame. They contain however passages of strong character-drawing, like that of the Porreños, three ancient spinster sisters of a fallen patrician house in ‹El Audaz,› which are equal to his later work.

He next entered upon an extensive enterprise which soon began to give him both reputation and profit. This was the writing of a score of historical romances, after the model of those of Erckmann-Chatrian, called ‹Episódios Nacionales› (National Episodes). They are divided into two series, the first beginning with ‹Trafalgar› (1873), the second with ‹El Equipaje del Rey José› (King Joseph's Baggage: 1875). They deal with the two modern periods comprising the deliverance of the country from the usurpation of the French, and the more obscure struggles against Ferdinand VII., who sought to reduce the country under the same absolutist rule that had prevailed before the ideas of the French Revolution liberalized the whole of Europe. The history in these romances is intermingled with personal interests and adventures, to give it an air of informality; and though each is complete in itself, some knowledge of Spanish history is desirable as an aid to understanding them. They are considerably interlinked among themselves, the same characters appearing more or less in successive volumes. The hero of the first series is one Gabriel, who narrates them all in the first person. He is a poor boy who becomes servant to a family near Cadiz. He accompanies his master on board the huge Santissima Trinidad, the largest ship of her age, and is able to describe in detail the action of Trafalgar, the description being the more interesting for us as coming from the Spanish point of view. In ‹La Corte de Carlos IV.› (The Court of Charles IV.: 1873), we find him page to a leading actress, and an eye-witness to the degeneracy of that monarch and his favorite Godoy, which resulted in the seizure of the country by Napoleon for his brother Joseph. In ‹La Batalla de los Arapiles› (translated by Rollo Ogden as ‹The Battle of Salamanca›: 1875), the last of the series, the same Gabriel is a major, and performs an important commission for Wellington. He has risen to this level step by step, and on the way has had as many adventures as one of Dumas's guardsmen, and has carried them off as gallantly. In the second series of ‹Episódios,› Salvador Monsalud is the principal character. He is a young fellow who is led by dire want — and also by sharing the liberalized French view of the decadence and worthlessness of the Spanish form of rule — to take service in the bodyguard of Joseph Bonaparte. A chapter full of strength and pathos, in ‹King Joseph's Baggage,› shows him disowned by his mother and cast off by his village sweetheart on account of such service, both of them frantic with a spirit of independence like that which animated the Maid of Saragossa. A feature of this book that gives it originality is that the action turns not upon the usual principal features of battle, but upon the fate of the rich baggage train of booty with which Joseph Bonaparte had hoped to escape to France after his brief, disastrous reign.

The ‹Episódios› have had an extensive influence, and have been imitated, under a like title, in the Spanish Americas. The author's tone toward the past is generally severe and disdainful. «Had Spain, perchance, a ‹constitution› when she was the foremost nation in the world?» he puts into the mouth of one of his characters, with sardonic intent. He has been called unappreciative, and his attitude towards Spanish antiquity has been protested against by other leading writers, of more conservative feeling, as unwarranted. These romances contain some passages showing aversion to the barbarities of war, but in general they are less humanitarian than those of Erckmann-Chatrian: they are principally devoted to glorifying Spanish fortitude and courage. These books are a great advance upon the two earlier novels; from the first they showed literary workmanship of a high order: they possess ingenuity of plot, sufficient probability, and graphic power of description, movement, and conversation. In the latter respects, indeed, they surpass some of the author's later works that make more serious pretensions.

The wider and more definitely literary reputation of Pérez Galdós rests upon more than a score of other works, in addition to the above. These are distinctly novels, as contrasted with romances; and they treat of contemporary life, in a method that aims to be conscientiously observant and impartial. It is often said, without much reflection, that we see enough of the things close about us, and need our literary recreation in the remote and strange. But it must be recalled that we see those things without the eyes of genius, and he is a true benefactor who poetizes and dignifies life in making evident that all of life is vivid with interest, even that part of it nearest to us, which without such illumination we may have thought devoid of it. The words in which the ostensible narrator of ‹Lo Prohibido› (Forbidden Fruit: 1885), explains the purpose of his journal may well enough be taken to exhibit the method of Galdós. It was to set down «my prosaic adventures, events that in no way differ from those that fill and make up the lives of other men. I aspire to no further effects than such as the sincere and unaffected presentation of the truth may produce; and I have no design upon the reader's emotions by means of calculated surprises, frights, or conjurer's tricks, through which things look one way for a time and then turn out in a manner diametrically opposite.»

The titles of a number of his principal books, not hitherto given, with dates, are as follows. The dates are those when they were written, and they were generally published shortly after: ‹Doña Perfecta,› 1876; ‹Gloria,› 1876; ‹Torquemada en la Hoguera› (Torquemada at the Stake: 1876); ‹Marianela,› 1878; ‹La Familia de Leon Roch› (Leon Roch's Family: 1878); ‹Los Cien Mil Hijos de San Luis› (The Hundred Thousand Sons of Saint Louis: 1877) of the Episódios; ‹Un Faccioso Más› (A Rebel the More: 1879) the completion of the Episódios; ‹La Desheredada› (The Disowned: 1881); ‹El Amigo Manso› (Friend Mildman: 1882); ‹El Doctor Centeno,› 1883; ‹Tormento,› 1884; ‹La de Bringas› (That Mrs. de Bringas: 1884); ‹Fortunata y Jacinta,› 1886; ‹Miau,› 1888; ‹La Incógnita› (The Unknown: 1889); ‹Realidad› (Reality: 1890); ‹Angel Guerra,› 1891; ‹Torquemada en la Cruz› (Torquemada on the Cross: 1894); ‹Torquemada en el Purgatorio› (Torquemada in Purgatory: 1894); ‹Torquemada y San Pedro,› 1895; ‹Nazarin,› 1895; ‹Halma,› 1896.

Even in his new departure, Galdós did not at once enter upon his final manner. ‹Doña Perfecta,› ‹The Family of Leon Roch,› and ‹Gloria› are quite distinctly didactic, or «novels with a purpose»; while ‹Marianela› is somewhat cloyingly sentimental, a prose poem after the manner of Ouida. In spite of all this, however, ‹Doña Perfecta› has been pronounced by many his best work. It is the one that has obtained greatest celebrity abroad, and it is the one, all things considered, likely to be the most satisfactory example of his work to the English reader. ‹La Desheredada› marks the transition to his final period, and he has put it upon record that with this book the real difficulties of his vocation began. It is a poignantly affecting story of a poor girl who was brought up, by a parent half knave and half insane, to believe that she was not his daughter but that of a noble house. After his death she undertakes in all good faith to prosecute her claim, and is thrown into prison as an impostor. Her heart is broken by the disillusionment; she cannot adjust herself to life again without the sweetness of that beguiling belief, and so, in the end, not having the boldness to die, she throws herself upon the street, a social outcast. Both in the person of Isidora and others, the book is a moving treatise on false education. Other leading figures are her brother, a young «hoodlum» and thief, the burden of whose career she has also to bear upon her slender shoulders, and the pampered son of the poor Sastres, who have denied themselves bread that he might have an education and luxuries. He has a hundred fine schemes for getting a living, but never a one of them includes turning his hand to a stroke of honest labor.

'El Amigo Manso' is an extended piece of character-drawing, self-told, in a gently humorous vein. It gives an account of a college instructor, very benevolent, very methodical and prudent, and a trifle conceited and patronizing, who is in love with a pretty governess. By the time he has settled all his judicious pros and cons, the pretty governess, who really cared nothing about him, is engaged to a suitor of a more dashing sort. The scenes of 'Tormento,' 'La de Bringas,' and 'Miau' are laid chiefly among the class of minor office-holders, with whose manners the author shows an exhaustive familiarity, and each has its peculiar tragic situation in itself. 'Realidad,' written once in the form of a novel, and again as a drama, treats of the subject of a wife's infidelity, as it might pass in real life, instead of in the conventional and hackneyed way. Its title seems to propose to adhere even closer to the exact truth than do the others. There come to mind, in its suppressed passion and its calm, intellectual, and bitter philosophy, suggestions both of Ibsen and Suderman. The banker Orozco, a noble and reserved nature, does not slay his wife, does not banish her from him, nor even make her reproaches. Augusta, on her side, wonders if his mind is not giving way. This bitter commentary on life is as near as her smaller mind can approach to a comprehension of his magnanimous conduct. The same Augusta, earlier, has said in conversation, «Real life is the greatest of all inventors; the only one who is ever ready, fresh, and inexhaustible in resource.» In these books, however serious, the purpose does not obtrude to the detriment of art; the reader is left free to draw his own conclusions, as from events in actual life; the author ostensibly is neither for nor against, and yet he leaves us in no doubt as to his decision, always a moral and stimulating one.

The favorite scenes of Galdós's books are in Madrid and the small suburban resorts round about it, or at the numerous mineral springs which are so important a feature of Spanish summer life. He himself lives at Madrid, but goes for the season to a summer place he owns on the bold cliffs of the Bay of Biscay, at Santander. There, too he is near to Pereda, between whom and himself a remarkable friendship exists. A friendship so strong, warm, and long continued has been recognized as a notable feature in the careers of both. It is the more remarkable because except in literature, which both set above everything else, he is violently opposed to most of the views of Pereda—a conservative of the conservatives, even to the point of preferring the absolutist pretender Don Carlos for king. Even at Madrid and at Santander, however, Galdós's scenery is mere stage setting; he does not describe nature sympathetically nor aim to render local color in an accurate way. As the action must pass somewhere, he gives it just as much of a setting as will suffice, and seems satisfied with that. The impression of his books, on the whole, is a gloomy one. He who sees life clearly must perchance see it darkly, and few see it more clearly than Galdós. Yet his admirers will not have it that he is pessimistic, because Nature herself is not pessimistic. Even the sadness of nightfall ought not to be considered gloomy, they say, with much show of reason, since it is only the preparation for another day.

William Henry Bishop

THE FIRST NIGHT OF A FAMOUS PLAY, IN THE YEAR 1807

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[Gabriel, a boy of sixteen, has taken service as page with a very charming actress of the Principe Theatre. Between this theatre and La Cruz exists the same sort of hostility as between the rival theatres at Venice when Goldoni inaugurated his reform. La Cruz represents the new and «natural» spirit in the drama, as against the absurd artificial tradition that had prevailed up to that time. A part of Gabriel's duties is to go and hiss the plays at that theatre. The principal occasion of this kind is when he accompanies a band, led by a rival playwright, to the first performance of ‹El Sí de las Niñas› (The Maidens' Yes), by the famous Moratin, the leading piece of the new school.]

«WHAT an opening!» he [the rival poet and playwright] exclaimed, as he listened to the first dialogue between Don Diego and Simon. «A pretty way to begin a comedy! The scene a village inn! What can happen of any interest in a village inn? In all my plays, and they are many, —though never a one has been represented,—the action opens in a Corinthian garden, with monumental fountains to the right and left, and a temple of Juno in the background; or in a wide square with three regiments drawn up, and in the background the city of Warsaw, with a bridge, and so forth. And just listen to the twaddle this old man is made to talk! He is about to marry a young girl who has been brought up by the nuns of Guadalajara. Well, is that very remarkable? Is not that a matter of everyday occurrence?»

Pouring out these remarks, that confounded poet did not allow me to hear a word of the piece, and though I answered all his comments with humbly acquiescent monosyllables, I only wished that he would hold his tongue, deuce take him! . . .

«What a vulgar subject! what low ideas!» he exclaimed, loud enough for every one to hear. «And this is how comedies are written!» . . .

«But let us listen to it,» said I, finding my chief's comments quite intolerable. «We can laugh at Moratin afterwards.»

«But I cannot bear such a medley of absurdities,» he went on. «We do not come to the theatre to see just what is to be seen any day in the streets, or in every house you go into. If instead of enlarging on her matrimonial experiences, the lady were to come in invoking curses on an enemy because he had killed one-and-twenty of her sons in battle, and left her with only the twenty-second, still an infant at the breast, and if she had to carry that one off to save him from being eaten by the besieged, all dying of famine — then there would be some interest in the plot, and the public would clap their hands till they were sore. Gabriel, my boy, we must protest, protest vehemently. We must thump the floor with our feet and sticks to show that we are bored and out of patience. Yawn; open your mouth till your jaws are dislocated; look about you; let all the neighbors see that we are people of taste, and utterly weary of this tiresome and monstrous piece.»

No sooner said than done: we began thumping on the floor, and yawning in chorus, exclaiming, «What a bore!» «What a dreary piece!» «What waste of money!» and other phrases to the same effect; all of which soon bore fruit. The party in the pit imitated our patriotic example with great exactness. A general murmur of dissatisfaction was presently audible from every part of the theatre; for though the author had enemies, he had no lack of friends too, scattered throughout the pit, boxes, and upper tiers, and they were not slow to protest against our demonstration, sometimes by applauding, and then again by roaring at us with threats and oaths, to be silent; till a stentorian voice from the very back of the pit bellowed, «Turn the blackguards out!» raising a noisy storm of applause that reduced us to silence.

Our poetaster was almost jumping out of his skin with indignation, and persisted in making his remarks as the piece went on. . . .

"A pretty plot indeed! It seems hardly credible that a civilized nation should applaud it. I would sentence Moratin to the galleys, and forbid his writing such coarse stuff as long as he lives. So you call this a play, Gabrielito? There is no intrigue, no plot, no surprise, no catastrophe, no illusion, no *quid pro quo;* no attempt at disguising a character to make it seem another—not even the little complication that comes of two men provoking each other as enemies, and then discovering that they are father and son. If Don Diego now, were to catch his nephew and kill him out of hand in the cellar, and prepare a banquet and have a dish of the victim's flesh served up to his bride, well disguised with spice and bay leaves, there would be some spirit in the thing." . . .

I could not, in fact, conceal my enjoyment of the scene, which seemed to me a masterpiece of nature, grace, and interesting comedy. The poet however called me to order, abusing me for deserting to the hostile camp.

"I beg your pardon," said I. "It was a mistake. And yet—does it not strike you, too, that this scene is not altogether bad?"

"How should you be able to judge?—a mere novice who never wrote a line in your life! Pray what is there in this scene in the least remarkable, or pathetic, or historical?"

"But it is nature itself. I feel that I have seen in the real world just what the author has set on the stage."

"Gaby! simpleton! that is exactly what makes it so bad. Have you not observed that in 'Frederick the Second,' in 'Catharine of Russia,' in 'The Slave of Negroponte,' and other fine works, nothing ever takes place that has the smallest resemblance to real life? Is not everything in those plays strange, startling, exceptional, wonderful, and surprising? That is why they are so good. The poets of to-day do not choose to imitate those of my time, and hence art has fallen to the lowest depths."

"And yet, begging your pardon," I said, "I cannot help thinking— The play is wretched, I quite agree, and when you say so there must be a good reason for it. But the idea here seems to me a good one, since I fancy the author has intended to censure the vicious system of education which young girls get nowadays." . . .

"And who asks the author to introduce all this philosophy?" said the pedant. "What has the theatre to do with moralizing?

In the ‘Magician of Astrakhan,’ in ‘Leon and the Asturias Gave Heraldry to Spain,’ and in the ‘Triumphs of Don Pelayo’—plays that all the world admires—did you ever find a passage that describes how girls are to be brought up?»

«I have certainly read or heard somewhere that the theatre was to serve the purposes of entertainment and instruction.»

«Stuff and nonsense!»

Translation of Clara Bell.

DOÑA PERFECTA'S DAUGHTER

From ‘Doña Perfecta.’ Copyright 1895, by Harper & Brothers

[Pepe Rey, a young engineer, arrives at Orbajosa to marry his cousin Rosario, the match having been made up between his father and Doña Perfecta, the girl's mother, who is warmly attached to the father of Pepe, her brother, and furthermore under heavy obligations to him for his excellent management of her large property interests. The landscape is the arid and poverty-stricken country of central Spain, though the town itself—«seated on the slope of a hill from the midst of whose closely clustered houses arose many dark towers, and on the height above it the ruins of a dilapidated castle»—such a town would probably be more appreciated by a traveler from abroad and a lover of the picturesque, than by a Spaniard, too familiar with its type. Orbajosa is a little place, full of narrow prejudices and vanities. Pepe Rey, with his modern ways, soon finds that he is wounding these prejudices at every turn. We look on with pained surprise at the difficulties that grow up around the young man, an excellent and kind-hearted fellow. Lawsuits are multiplied against him; he is turned out of the cathedral by order of the bishop for strolling about during service-time to look at some architectural features; and he is refused the hand of his cousin. Doña Perfecta herself joins in this hostility, which finally develops into a venomous bitterness that menaces his life. Such a feeling was not the outgrowth of mere provincial narrowness: we see in the end that it was the result of the plot of Maria Remedios, a woman of a humble sort, who aspired to secure the heiress Rosario for her own chubby-faced home-bred son. She influenced the village priest, and he influenced Doña Perfecta. Early in the day the young engineer would have abandoned the sinister place but for Rosario, who really loved him. She conveyed to him, on a scrap from the margin of a newspaper, the message: «They say you are going away. If you do, I shall die.»

She is a charming picture of girlhood,—lovely, true-hearted, affectionate, aspiring to be heroic, and yet crippled at last by a filial conscience and the long habit of clinging dependence. She has agreed to flee at night with her lover, and he is already in the garden. Her mother, the stern Doña Perfecta, ranging uneasily through the house, enters her room about the appointed time for the escape.]

«Why don't you sleep?» her mother asked her.

«What time is it?» asked the girl.

«It will soon be midnight.» . . .

Rosario was trembling, and everything about her denoted the keenest anxiety. She lifted her eyes to heaven supplicatingly, and then turned them on her mother with a look of the utmost terror.

«Why, what is the matter with you?»

«Did you not say it was midnight?»

«Yes.»

«Then — but is it already midnight?» . . .

«Something is the matter with you; you have something on your mind,» said her mother, fixing on her daughter her penetrating eyes.

«Yes — I wanted to tell you,» stammered the girl, «I wanted to say — Nothing, nothing; I will go to sleep.»

«Rosario, Rosario! your mother can read your heart like an open book,» exclaimed Doña Perfecta with severity. «You are agitated. I have already told you that I am willing to pardon you if you will repent, if you are a good and sensible girl.»

«Why, am I not good? Ah, mamma, mamma! I am dying.» Rosario burst into a flood of bitter and disconsolate tears.

«What are these tears about?» said her mother, embracing her. «If they are tears of repentance, blessed be they.»

«I don't repent! I can't repent!» cried the girl, in a burst of sublime despair. She lifted her head, and in her face was depicted a sudden inspired strength. Her hair fell in disorder over her shoulders. Never was there seen a more beautiful image of a rebellious angel.

«What is this? Have you lost your senses?» said Doña Perfecta, laying both hands on her daughter's shoulders.

«I am going away! I am going away!» said the girl with the exaltation of delirium. And she sprang out of bed.

«Rosario, Rosario — my daughter! For God's sake, what is this?»

«Ah mamma, señora!» exclaimed the girl, embracing her mother; «bind me fast!»

«In truth, you would deserve it. What madness is this?»

«Bind me fast! I am going away — I am going away with him!» . . .

« Has he told you to do so? has he counseled you to do that? has he commanded you to do that? » asked the mother, launching these words like thunderbolts against her daughter.

« He has counseled me to do it. We have agreed to be married. We must be married, mamma, dear mamma. I will love you — I know that I ought to love you — I shall be forever lost if I do not love you. »

« Rosario, Rosario! » cried Doña Perfecta in a terrible voice, « rise! »

There was a short pause.

« This man — has he written to you? »

« Yes. »

« Have you seen him again since that night? »

« Yes. »

« And you have written to him? »

« I have written to him also. O señora! why do you look at me in that way? You are not my mother. »

« Would to God that I were not! Rejoice in the harm you are doing me. You are killing me; you have given me my death-blow! » cried Doña Perfecta, with indescribable agitation. « You say that that man — »

« Is my husband — I will be his wife, protected by the law. You are not a woman! Why do you look at me in that way? You make me tremble. Mother, mother, do not condemn me! »

« You have already condemned yourself — that is enough. Obey me, and I will forgive you. Answer me — when did you receive letters from that man? »

« To-day. »

« What treachery! what infamy! » cried her mother, roaring rather than speaking. « Had you appointed a meeting? »

« Yes. »

« When? »

« To-night. »

« Where? »

« Here, here! I will confess everything, everything! I know it is a crime. I am a wretch; but you, my mother, will take me out of this hell. Give your consent. Say one word to me, only one word! »

« That man here in my house! » cried Doña Perfecta, springing back several paces from her daughter.

Rosario followed her on her knees.

At the same instant three blows were heard, three crashes, three explosions. [Maria Remedios had spied upon Pepe Rey, the lover; shown Caballuco, a brutal servant and ally, how to follow him stealthily into the garden; and had then come to arouse the house.] It was the heart of Maria Remedios knocking at the door through the knocker. The house trembled with an awful dread. Mother and daughter stood as motionless as statues.

A servant went down-stairs to open the door, and shortly afterward Maria Remedios, who was not now a woman but a basilisk enveloped in a mantle, entered Doña Perfecta's room. Her face, flushed with anxiety, exhaled fire.

« He is there, he is there,» she said, as she entered. « He got into the garden through the condemned door.» She paused for breath at every syllable.

« I know already,» returned Doña Perfecta, with a sort of bellow.

Rosario fell senseless to the floor.

« Let us go down-stairs,» said Doña Perfecta, without paying any attention to her daughter's swoon.

The two women glided down-stairs like two snakes. The maids and the man-servant were in the hall, not knowing what to do. Doña Perfecta passed through the dining-room into the garden, followed by Maria Remedios.

« Fortunately we have Ca-Ca-Ca-balluco there,» said the canon's niece.

« Where? »

« In the garden, also. He cli-cli-climbed over the wall.»

Doña Perfecta explored the darkness with her wrathful eyes. Rage gave them the singular power of seeing in the dark that is peculiar to the feline race.

« I see a figure there,» she said. « It is going towards the oleanders.»

« It is he,» cried Remedios. « But there comes Ramos — Ramos! » [Cristóbal Ramos, or « Cabulluco.»]

The colossal figure of the Centaur was plainly distinguishable.

« Towards the oleanders, Ramos! Towards the oleanders! »

Doña Perfecta took a few steps forward. Her hoarse voice, vibrating with a terrible accent, hissed forth these words: —

« Cristobal, Cristobal, — kill him! »

A shot was heard. Then another.

Translation of Mary J. Serrano.

A FAMILY OF OFFICE-HOLDERS

Don Francisco de Bringas y Caballero had a second-class clerkship in one of the most ancient of the royal bureaus. He belonged to a family which had held just such offices for time out of mind. «Government employees were his parents and his grandparents, and it is believed that his great-grandparents, and even the ancestors of these, served in one way and another in the administration of the two worlds.» His wife Doña Rosalia Pipaon was equally connected with the official class, and particularly with that which had to do with the domestic service of the royal abodes. Thus, «on producing her family tree, this was found to show not so much glorious deeds of war and statesmanship as those humbler doings belonging to a long and intimate association with the royal person. Her mother had been lady of the queen's wardrobe, her uncle a halberdier of the royal guard, her grandfather keeper of the buttery, other uncles at various removes, equerries, pages, dispatch-bearers, huntsmen, and managers of the royal farm at Aranjuez, and so forth and so on. . . . For this dame there existed two things wholly Divine; namely, heaven and that almost equally desirable dwelling-place for the elect which we indicate by the mere laconic word ‹the Palace.› In the Palace were her family history and her ideal; her aspiration was that Bringas might obtain a superior post in the royal exchequer, and that then they should go and take up their abode in one of the apartments of the second story of the great mansion which were conceded to such tenants.» The above is from ‹Tormento.› In the next succeeding novel, ‹La de Bringas,› this aspiration is gratified; the Bringas family are installed in the Palace, in the quarters assigned to the employees of the royal household. The efforts of two of their acquaintances to find them, in the puzzling intricacies of the place, are thus amusingly described.

ABOVE-STAIRS IN A ROYAL PALACE

From ‹La de Bringas›

Well, this is about the way it was. We threw ourselves bravely into the interminable corridor, a veritable street, or alley at least, paved with red tiles, feebly lighted with gas jets, and full of doublings and twistings. Now and then it spread out into broad openings like little plazas, inundated with sunlight which entered through large openings from the main court-yard. This illumination penetrated lengthwise along the white walls of the narrow passageways, alleys, or tunnels, or whatever they may be called, growing ever feebler and more uncertain as it went, till finally it fainted away entirely at sight of the fan-shaped yellow gas flames, smoking little circlets upon their protecting metal disks. There were uncounted paneled doors with numbers on them, some newly painted and others moldering and weather-stained, but not one displaying the figure we were seeking. At this one you would see a rich silken bell cord, some happy find in the royal upholstery shop, while the next had nothing more than a poor frayed rope's-end; and these were an indication of what was likely to be found within, as to order and neatness or disarray and squalor. So, too, the mats or bits of carpet laid before the doors threw a useful light upon the character of the lodgings. We came upon vacant apartments with cobwebs spun across the openings, and the door gratings thick with dust, and through broken transoms, drew chill drafts that conveyed the breath of silence and desolation. Even whole precincts were abandoned, and the vaultings, of unequal height, returned the sound of our footsteps hollowly to our ears. We passed up one stairway, then down another, and then, as likely as not, we would ascend again. . . . The labyrinthine maze led us on and ever onward. . . .

"It is useless to come here," at length said Pez, decidedly losing patience, "without charts and a mariner's compass. I suppose we are now in the south wing of the palace. The roofs down there must be those of the Hall of Columns and the outer stairway, are they not? What a huge mass of a place!" The roofs of which he spoke were great pyramidal shapes protected with lead, and they covered in the ceilings on which Bayeu's frescoed cherubs cut their lively pigeon-wings and pirouettes.

Still going on and on and onward without pause, we found ourselves shut up in a place without exit, a considerable inclosure lighted from the top, and we had to turn round and beat a retreat by the way we had entered. Any one who knows the palace and its symmetrical grandeur only from without could never divine all these irregularities that constitute a veritable small town in its upper regions. In truth, for an entire century there has been but one continual modifying of the original plan, a stopping up here and an opening there, a condemning of staircases, a widening of some rooms at the expense of others, a changing of corridors into living-rooms and of living-rooms into corridors, and a cutting through of partitions and a shutting up of windows. You fall in with stairways that begin but never arrive anywhere, and with balconies that are but the made-over roof coverings of dwelling-places below. These dove-cotes were once stately drawing-rooms, and on the other hand, these fine salons have been made out of the inclosing space of a grand staircase. Then again winding stairs are frequent; but if you should take them, Heaven knows what would become of you; and frequent, too, are glazed doors permanently closed, with naught behind them but silence, dust, and darkness. . . .

"We are looking for the apartment of Don Francisco Bringas."

"Bringas? yes, yes," said an old woman; "you're close to it. All you have got to do is, go down the first circular stairway you come to, and then make a half-turn. Bringas? yes to be sure; he's sacristan of the chapel."

"Sacristan,—he? What is the matter with you? He is head clerk of the Administrative Department."

"Oh, then he must be lower down, just off the terrace. I suppose you know your way to the fountain?"

"No, not we."

"You know the stairs called the Cáceres Staircase?"

"No, not that either."

"At any rate, you know where the Oratory is?"

"We know nothing about it."

"But the choir of the Oratory? but the dove-cotes?"—

Sum total, we had not the slightest acquaintance with any of that congeries of winding turns, sudden tricks, and baffling surprises. The architectural arrangement was a mad caprice, a mocking jest at all plan and symmetry. Nevertheless, despite our notable lack of experience we stuck to our quest, and even carried our infatuation so far as to reject the services of a boy who offered himself as our guide.

"We are now in the wing facing on the Plaza de Oriente," said Pez; "that is to say, at exactly the opposite extreme from the wing in which our friend resides." His geographical notions were delivered with the gravity and conviction of some character in Jules Verne. "Hence, the problem now demanding our attention is by what route to get from here to the western wing. In the first place, the cupola of the chapel and the grand stairway roof-covering furnish us with a certain basis; we should take our bearings from them. I assume that, having once arrived in the western wing, we shall be numskulls indeed if we do not strike Bringas's abode. All the same, I for one will never return to these outlandish regions without a pocket compass, and what is more, without a good supply of provender too, against such emergencies as this."

Before striking out on the new stage of our explorations, as thus projected, we paused to look down from the window. The

Plaza de Oriente lay below us in a beautiful panorama, and beyond it a portion of Madrid crested with at least fifty cupolas, steeples, and bell towers. The equestrian Philip IV. appeared a mere toy, and the Royal Theatre a paltry shed. . . . The doves had their nests far below where we stood, and we saw them, by pairs or larger groups, plunge headlong downward into the dizzy abyss, and then presently come whirling upward again, with swift and graceful motion, and settle on the carved capitals and moldings. It is credibly stated that all the political revolutions do not matter a jot to these doves, and there is nothing either in the ancient pile they inhabit or in the free realms of air around it, to limit their sway. They remain undisputed masters of the place.

Away we go once more. Pez begins to put the geographical notions he has acquired from the books of Jules Verne yet further into practice. At every step he stops to say to me, « Now we are making our way northward.—We shall undoubtedly soon find a road or trail on our right, leading to the west.—There is no cause to be alarmed in descending this winding stairway to the second story.—Good, it is done! Well, bless me! where are we now? I don't see the main dome any longer, not so much as a lightning-rod of it.—We are in the realms of the feebly flickering gas once more.—Suppose we ascend again by this other stairway luckily just at hand. What now? Well, here we are back again in the eastward wing and nothing else, just where we were before. Are we? no, yes; see, down there in the court the big dome is still on our right. There's a regular grove of chimney stacks. You may believe it or not, but this sort of thing begins to make my head swim; it seems as if the whole place gave a lurch now and then, like a ship at sea.—The fountain must be over that way, do you see? for the maids are coming and going from there with their pitchers.—Oh well, I for one give the whole thing up. We want a guide, and an expert, or we'll never get out of this. I can't take another step; we've walked miles and I can't stand on my legs.—Hey, there, halloo! send us a guide!—Oh for a guide! Get me out of this infernal tangle quickly!» . . .

We came at last to Bringas's apartment. When we got there, we understood how we must have passed it, earlier, without knowing it, for its number was quite rubbed out and invisible.

Translation of William Henry Bishop.

FRANCIS GALTON

(1822–)

The modern doctrine of heredity regards man less as an individual than as a link in a series, involuntarily inheriting and transmitting a number of peculiarities, physical and mental. The general acceptance of this doctrine would necessitate a modification of popular ethical conceptions, and consequently of social conditions. Except Darwin, probably no one has done so much to place the doctrine on a scientific basis as Francis Galton, whose brilliant researches have sought to establish the hereditary nature of psychical as well as physical qualities.

Mr. Galton first took up the subject of the transmissibility of intellectual gifts in his 'Hereditary Genius' (1869). An examination of the relationships of the judges of England for a period of two hundred years, of the statesmen of the time of George III., of the premiers of the last one hundred years, and of a certain selection of divines and modern scholars, together with the kindred of the most illustrious commanders, men of letters and science, poets, painters, and musicians of all times and nations, resulted in his conclusion that man's mental abilities are derived by inheritance under exactly the same limitations as are the forms and features of the whole organic world. Mr. Galton argued that, as it is practicable to produce a highly gifted race of men by judicious marriages during several consecutive generations, the State ought to encourage by dowries and other artificial means such marriages as make for the elevation of the race.

Having set forth the hereditary nature of general intellectual ability, he attempts to discover what particular qualities commonly combine to form genius, and whether they also are transmissible. 'English Men of Science: Their Nature and Nurture' (1874) was a summary of the results obtained from inquiries addressed to the most eminent scientific men of England, respecting the circumstances of heredity and environment which might have been influential in directing them toward their careers. One hundred and eighty persons were questioned. From the replies it appeared that in the order of their prevalence, the chief qualities that commonly unite to form scientific genius are energy both of body and mind; good health; great independence of character; tenacity of purpose; practical business habits; and strong innate tastes for science generally, or for some branch of it. The replies indicated the hereditary character of the qualities in question, showing incidentally that in the matter of heredity the influence of the father is greater than that of the mother. It would have been interesting to have had the results of similar inquiries in the case of other classes of eminent persons,—statesmen, lawyers, poets, divines, etc. However, it is problematical whether other classes would have entered so heartily into the spirit of the inquiry, and given such full and frank replies.

Large variation in individuals from their parents is, he argues, not only not incompatible with the strict doctrine of heredity, but is a consequence of it wherever the breed is impure. Likewise, abnormal attributes of individual parents are less transmissible than the general characteristics of the family. Both these influences operate to deprive the science of heredity of the certainty of prediction in individual cases. The latter influence—*i. e.*, the law of reversion—is made the subject of a separate inquiry in the volume entitled 'Natural Inheritance' (1889).

In 'Inquiries into the Human Faculty and its Development' (1883), he described a method of accurately measuring mental processes, such as sensation, volition, the formation of elementary judgments, and the estimation of numbers; suggested composite photography as a means of studying the physiognomy of criminal and other classes; treated the subject of heredity in crime; and discussed the mental process of visualizing.

'Finger Prints' (1892) is a study from the point of view of heredity of the patterns observed in the skin of finger-tips. These patterns are not only hereditary, but also furnish a certain means of identification—an idea improved in Mark Twain's story of 'Pudd'nhead Wilson.'

Mr. Galton is himself an example of the heredity of genius, being a grandson of Erasmus Darwin, the author of 'Zoönomia,' and a cousin of Charles Darwin. Born near Birmingham in 1822, he studied some time at Birmingham Hospital and at King's College, London, with the intention of entering the medical profession; but abandoned this design, and was graduated from Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1844. He soon after made two journeys of exploration in Africa, the latter of which is described in his 'Narrative of an Explorer in South Africa' (1853). An indirect result of these journeys was 'The Art of Travel; or Shifts and Contrivances in Wild Countries' (1855).

'Meteorographica' (1863) is noteworthy as the first attempt ever made to represent in charts on a large scale the progress of the weather, and on account of the theory of anti-cyclones which Mr. Galton advances in it.

Although strictly scientific in aim and method, Mr. Galton's writings, particularly those on heredity, appeal to all classes of readers and possess a distinct literary value. One may admire in them simplicity and purity of diction, animation of style, fertility in the construction of theory, resourcefulness in the search for proof, and a fine enthusiasm for the subject under consideration.

THE COMPARATIVE WORTH OF DIFFERENT RACES

From ‹Hereditary Genius›

EVERY long-established race has necessarily its peculiar fitness for the conditions under which it has lived, owing to the sure operation of Darwin's law of natural selection. However, I am not much concerned for the present with the greater part of those aptitudes, but only with such as are available in some form or other of high civilization. We may reckon upon the advent of a time when civilization, which is now sparse and feeble and far more superficial than it is vaunted to be, shall overspread the globe. Ultimately it is sure to do so, because civilization is the necessary fruit of high intelligence when found in a social animal, and there is no plainer lesson to be read off the face of Nature than that the result of the operation of her laws is to evoke intelligence in connection with sociability. Intelligence is as much an advantage to an animal as physical strength or any other natural gift; and therefore, out of two varieties of any race of animal who are equally endowed in other respects, the most intelligent variety is sure to prevail in the battle of life. Similarly, among animals as intelligent as man, the most social race is sure to prevail, other qualities being equal.

Under even a very moderate form of material civilization, a vast number of aptitudes acquired through the «survivorship of the fittest» and the unsparing destruction of the unfit, for hundreds of generations, have become as obsolete as the old mail-coach habits and customs since the establishment of railroads, and there is not the slightest use in attempting to preserve them; they are hindrances, and not gains, to civilization. I shall refer to some of these a little further on, but I will first speak of the qualities needed in civilized society. They are, speaking generally, such as will enable a race to supply a large contingent to the various groups of eminent men of whom I have treated in my several chapters. Without going so far as to say that this very convenient test is perfectly fair, we are at all events justified in making considerable use of it, as I will do in the estimates I am about to give.

In comparing the worth of different races, I shall make frequent use of the law of deviation from an average, to which I have already been much beholden; and to save the reader's time and patience, I propose to act upon an assumption that would require a good deal of discussion to limit, and to which the reader may at first demur, but which cannot lead to any error of importance in a rough provisional inquiry. I shall assume that the *intervals* between the grades of ability are the *same* in all the races. . . . I know this cannot be strictly true, for it would be in defiance of analogy if the variability of all races were precisely the same; but on the other hand, there is good reason to expect that the error introduced by the assumption cannot sensibly affect the off-hand results for which alone I propose to employ it; moreover, the rough data I shall adduce will go far to show the justice of this expectation.

Let us then compare the negro race with the Anglo-Saxon, with respect to those qualities alone which are capable of producing judges, statesmen, commanders, men of literature and science, poets, artists, and divines. If the negro race in America had been affected by no social disabilities, a comparison of their achievements with those of the whites in their several branches of intellectual effort, having regard to the total number of their respective populations, would give the necessary information. As matters stand, we must be content with much rougher data.

First, the negro race has occasionally, but very rarely, produced such men as Toussaint L'Ouverture. . . .

Secondly, the negro race is by no means wholly deficient in men capable of becoming good factors, thriving merchants, and otherwise considerably raised above the average of whites. . . .

Thirdly, we may compare, but with much caution, the relative position of negroes in their native country with that of the travelers who visit them. The latter no doubt bring with them the knowledge current in civilized lands, but that is an advantage of less importance than we are apt to suppose. The native chief has as good an education in the art of ruling men as can be desired; he is continually exercised in personal government, and usually maintains his place by the ascendency of his character, shown every day over his subjects and rivals. A traveler in wild countries also fills to a certain degree the position of a commander, and has to confront native chiefs at every inhabited place. The result is familiar enough — the white traveler almost invariably holds his own in their presence. It is seldom that we hear of a white traveler meeting with a black chief whom he feels to be the better man. I have often discussed this subject with competent persons, and can only recall a few cases of the inferiority of the white man,—certainly not more than might be ascribed to an average actual difference of three grades, of which one may be due to the relative demerits of native education, and the remaining two to a difference in natural gifts.

Fourthly, the number among the negroes of those whom we should call half-witted men is very large. Every book alluding to negro servants in America is full of instances. I was myself much impressed by this fact during my travels in Africa. The mistakes the negroes made in their own matters were so childish, stupid, and simpleton-like as frequently to make me ashamed of my own species. I do not think it any exaggeration to say that their *c* is as low as our *e*, which would be a difference of two grades, as before. I have no information as to actual idiocy among the negroes — I mean, of course, of that class of idiocy which is not due to disease.

The Australian type is at least one grade below the African negro. I possess a few serviceable data about the natural capacity of the Australian, but not sufficient to induce me to invite the reader to consider them.

The average standard of the Lowland Scotch and the English North Country men is decidedly a fraction of a grade superior to that of the ordinary English, because the number of the former who attain to eminence is far greater than the proportionate number of their race would have led us to expect. The same superiority is distinctly shown by a comparison of the well-being of the masses of the population; for the Scotch laborer is much less of a drudge than the Englishman of the Midland counties — he does his work better, and «lives his life» besides. The peasant women of Northumberland work all day in the fields, and are not broken down by the work; on the contrary, they take a pride in their effective labor as girls, and when married they attend well to the comfort of their homes. It is perfectly distressing to me to witness the draggled, drudged, mean look of the mass of individuals, especially of the women, that one meets in the streets of London and other purely English towns. The conditions of their life seem too hard for their constitutions, and to be crushing them into degeneracy.

The ablest race of whom history bears record is unquestionably the ancient Greek, partly because their masterpieces in the principal departments of intellectual activity are still unsurpassed and in many respects unequaled, and partly because the population that gave birth to the creators of those masterpieces was very small. Of the various Greek sub-races, that of Attica was the ablest, and she was no doubt largely indebted to the following cause for her superiority: Athens opened her arms to immigrants, but not indiscriminately, for her social life was such that none but very able men could take any pleasure in it; on the other hand, she offered attractions such as men of the highest ability and culture could find in no other city. Thus by a system of partly unconscious selection she built up a magnificent breed of human animals, which in the space of one century—viz., between 530 and 430 B. C.—produced the following illustrious persons, fourteen in number:—

Statesmen and Commanders.—Themistocles (mother an alien), Miltiades, Aristides, Cimon (son of Miltiades), Pericles (son of Xanthippus, the victor at Mycale).

Literary and Scientific Men.—Thucydides, Socrates, Xenophon, Plato.

Poets.—Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes.

Sculptor.—Phidias.

We are able to make a closely approximate estimate of the population that produced these men, because the number of the inhabitants of Attica has been a matter of frequent inquiry, and critics appear at length to be quite agreed in the general results. . . . The average ability of the Athenian race is, on the lowest possible estimate, very nearly two grades higher than our own—that is, about as much as our race is above that of the African negro. This estimate, which may seem prodigious to some, is confirmed by the quick intelligence and high culture of the Athenian commonalty, before whom literary works were recited, and works of art exhibited, of a far more severe character than could possibly be appreciated by the average of our race, the calibre of whose intellect is easily gauged by a glance at the contents of a railway book-stall.

We know, and may guess something more, of the reason why this marvelously gifted race declined. Social morality grew exceedingly lax; marriage became unfashionable, and was avoided; many of the more ambitious and accomplished women were avowed courtesans and consequently infertile, and the mothers of the incoming population were of a heterogeneous class. In a small sea-bordered country, where emigration and immigration are constantly going on, and where the manners are as dissolute as were those of Greece in the period of which I speak, the purity of a race would necessarily fail. It can be therefore no surprise to us, though it has been a severe misfortune to humanity, that the high Athenian breed decayed and disappeared; for if it had maintained its excellence, and had multiplied and spread over large countries, displacing inferior populations (which it well might have done, for it was exceedingly prolific), it would assuredly have accomplished results advantageous to human civilization, to a degree that transcends our powers of imagination.

If we could raise the average standard of our race only one grade, what vast changes would be produced! The number of men of natural gifts equal to those of the eminent men of the present day would be necessarily increased more than tenfold; . . . but far more important to the progress of civilization would be the increase in the yet higher orders of intellect. We know how intimately the course of events is dependent on the thoughts of a few illustrious men. If the first-rate men in the different groups had never been born, even if those among them who have a place in my appendices on account of their hereditary gifts had never existed, the world would be very different to what it is. . . .

It seems to me most essential to the well-being of future generations, that the average standard of ability of the present time should be raised. Civilization is a new condition imposed upon man by the course of events, just as in the history of geological changes new conditions have continually been imposed on different races of animals. They have had the effect either of modifying the nature of the races through the process of natural selection, whenever the changes were sufficiently slow and the race sufficiently pliant, or of destroying them altogether, when the changes were too abrupt or the race unyielding. The number of the races of mankind that have been entirely destroyed under the pressure of the requirements of an incoming civilization, reads us a terrible lesson. Probably in no former period of the world has the destruction of the races of any animal whatever been effected over such wide areas, and with such startling rapidity, as in the case of savage man. In the North-American continent, in the West-Indian islands, in the Cape of Good Hope, in Australia, New Zealand, and Van Diemen's Land, the human denizens of vast regions have been entirely swept away in the short space of three centuries, less by the pressure of a stronger race than through the influence of a civilization they were incapable of supporting. And we too, the foremost laborers in creating this civilization, are beginning to show ourselves incapable of keeping pace with our own work. The needs of centralization, communication, and culture, call for more brains and mental stamina than the average of our race possess. We are in crying want for a greater fund of ability in all stations of life; for neither the classes of statesmen, philosophers, artisans, nor laborers are up to the modern complexity of their several professions. An extended civilization like ours comprises more interests than the ordinary statesmen or philosophers of our present race are capable of dealing with, and it exacts more intelligent work than our ordinary artisans and laborers are capable of performing. Our race is overweighted, and appears likely to be drudged into degeneracy by demands that exceed its powers. . . .

When the severity of the struggle for existence is not too great for the powers of the race, its action is healthy and conservative; otherwise it is deadly, just as we may see exemplified in the scanty, wretched vegetation that leads a precarious existence near the summer snow line of the Alps, and disappears altogether a little higher up. We want as much backbone as we can get, to bear the racket to which we are henceforth to be exposed, and as good brains as possible to contrive machinery, for modern life to work more smoothly than at present. We can in some degree raise the nature of man to a level with the new conditions imposed upon his existence; and we can also in some degree modify the conditions to suit his nature. It is clearly right that both these powers should be exerted, with the view of bringing his nature and the conditions of his existence into as close harmony as possible.

In proportion as the world becomes filled with mankind, the relations of society necessarily increase in complexity, and the nomadic disposition found in most barbarians becomes unsuitable to the novel conditions. There is a most unusual unanimity in respect to the causes of incapacity of savages for civilization, among writers on those hunting and migratory nations who are brought into contact with advancing colonization, and perish, as they invariably do, by the contact. They tell us that the labor of such men is neither constant nor steady; that the love of a wandering, independent life prevents their settling anywhere to work, except for a short time, when urged by want and encouraged by kind treatment. Meadows says that the Chinese call the barbarous races on their borders by a phrase which means «hither and thither,» «not fixed.» And any amount of evidence might be adduced, to show how deeply Bohemian habits of one kind or another were ingrained in the nature of the men who inhabited most parts of the earth, now overspread by the Anglo-Saxon and other civilized races. Luckily there is still room for adventure, and a man who feels the cravings of a roving, adventurous spirit to be too strong for resistance, may yet find a legitimate outlet for it in the colonies, in the army, or on board ship. But such a spirit is, on the whole, an heirloom that brings more impatient restlessness and beating of the wings against cage bars, than persons of more civilized characters can readily comprehend, and it is directly at war with the more modern portion of our moral natures. If a man be purely a nomad, he has only to be nomadic and his instinct is satisfied; but no Englishmen of the nineteenth century are purely nomadic. The most so among them have also inherited many civilized cravings that are necessarily starved when they become wanderers, in the same way as the wandering instincts are starved when they are settled at home. Consequently their nature has opposite wants, which can never be satisfied except by chance, through some very exceptional turn of circumstances. This is a serious calamity; and as the Bohemianism in the nature of our race is destined to perish, the sooner it goes the happier for mankind. The social requirements of English life are steadily destroying it. No man who only works by fits and starts is able to obtain his living nowadays, for he has not a chance of thriving in competition with steady workmen. If his nature revolts against the monotony of daily labor, he is tempted to the public-house, to intemperance, and it may be to poaching, and to much more serious crime; otherwise he banishes himself from our shores. In the first case, he is unlikely to leave as many children as men of more domestic and marrying habits; and in the second case, his breed is wholly lost to England. By this steady riddance of the Bohemian spirit of our race, the artisan part of our population is slowly becoming bred to its duties, and the primary qualities of the typical modern British workman are already the very opposite of those of the nomad.

What they are now was well described by Mr. Chadwick as consisting of "great bodily strength, applied under the command of a steady, persevering will; mental self-contentedness; impassibility to external irrelevant impressions, which carries them through the continued repetition of toilsome labor, 'steady as time.'"

It is curious to remark how unimportant to modern civilization has become the once famous and thoroughbred-looking Norman. The type of his features, which is probably in some degree correlated with his peculiar form of adventurous disposition, is no longer characteristic of our rulers, and is rarely found among celebrities of the present day; it is more often met with among the undistinguished members of highly born families, and especially among the less conspicuous officers of the army. Modern leading men in all paths of eminence, as may easily be seen in a collection of photographs, are of a coarser and more robust breed: less excitable and dashing, but endowed with far more ruggedness and real vigor. Such also is the case as regards the German portion of the Austrian nation. . . .

Much more alien to the genius of an enlightened civilization than the nomadic habit is the impulsive and uncontrolled nature of the savage. A civilized man must bear and forbear; he must keep before his mind the claims of the morrow as clearly as those of the passing minute; of the absent as well as of the present. This is the most trying of the new conditions imposed on man by civilization, and the one that makes it hopeless for any but exceptional natures among savages to live under them. The instinct of a savage is admirably consonant with the needs of savage life; every day he is in danger through transient causes; he lives from hand to mouth, in the hour and for the hour, without care for the past or forethought for the future: but such an instinct is utterly at fault in civilized life. The half-reclaimed savage, being unable to deal with more subjects of consideration than are directly before him, is continually doing acts through mere maladroitness and incapacity, at which he is afterwards deeply grieved and annoyed. The nearer inducements always seem to him, through his uncorrected sense of moral perspective, to be incomparably larger than others of the same actual size but more remote; consequently, when the temptation of the moment has been yielded to and passed away, and its bitter result comes in its turn before the man, he is amazed and remorseful at his past weakness. It seems incredible that he should have done that yesterday which to-day seems so silly, so unjust, and so unkindly. The newly reclaimed barbarian, with the impulsive, unstable nature of the savage, when he also chances to be gifted with a peculiarly generous and affectionate disposition, is of all others the man most oppressed with the sense of sin.

Now, it is a just assertion, and a common theme of moralists of many creeds, that man, such as we find him, is born with an imperfect nature. He has lofty aspirations, but there is a weakness in his disposition which incapacitates him from carrying his nobler purposes into effect. He sees that some particular course of action is his duty, and should be his delight; but his inclinations are fickle and base, and do not conform to his better judgment. The whole moral nature of man is tainted with sin, which prevents him from doing the things he knows to be right.

The explanation I offer to this apparent anomaly seems perfectly satisfactory from a scientific point of view. It is neither more nor less than that the development of our nature, whether under Darwin's law of natural selection or through the effects of changed ancestral habits, has not yet overtaken the development of our moral civilization. Man was barbarous but yesterday, and therefore it is not to be expected that the natural aptitudes of his race should already have become molded into accordance with his very recent advance. We, men of the present centuries, are like animals suddenly transplanted among new conditions of climate and of food: our instincts fail us under the altered circumstances.

My theory is confirmed by the fact that the members of old civilizations are far less sensible than recent converts from barbarism, of their nature being inadequate to their moral needs. The conscience of a negro is aghast at his own wild, impulsive nature, and is easily stirred by a preacher; but it is scarcely possible to ruffle the self-complacency of a steady-going Chinaman.

The sense of original sin would show, according to my theory, not that man was fallen from high estate, but that he was rising in moral culture with more rapidity than the nature of his race could follow. My view is corroborated by the conclusion reached at the end of each of the many independent lines of ethnological research — that the human race were utter savages in the beginning; and that after myriads of years of barbarism, man has but very recently found his way into the paths of morality and civilization.

ARNE GARBORG

(1851–)

ARNE GARBORG is one of the most potent forces in the new school of Norwegian literature. The contemporary of Alexander Kielland, who is more widely known abroad, he is however the representative of a vastly different phase. Kielland's works, except for their setting, are the result of general European culture; whereas Garborg has laid the foundations of a literature essentially Norse.

The new literature of young Norway is a true exponent of its social conditions. The ferment of its strivings and its discontent permeates the whole people. Much of Garborg's work is the chronicle of this social unrest, particularly among the peasant classes, where he himself by birth belongs. In the reaction against the sentimental idealism of the older school, he is the pioneer who has blazed the paths. Where Björnson gives rose-colored pictures of what peasant life might be, Garborg with heavy strokes of terrible meaning draws the outline of what it is. His daring and directness of speech aroused a storm of opposition, and he has also been made to suffer in a material way for the courage of his opinions, in that the position which he had held in the government service since 1879 was taken from him as a consequence of his books.

Arne Garborg was born at Jæderen, in the southwestern part of Norway, January 1851. The circumstances of his life were humble, and all of his surroundings were meagre in the extreme. His father, a village schoolmaster, was a man of nervous, fanatical temperament, with whom religion was a mania. In the obscure little village where he lived, Garborg's boyhood was outwardly uneventful but inwardly filled with conflict. Brought up in an atmosphere of pietism, the natural reaction led him into a kind of romantic atheistic unbelief. In the turmoil of his mind, the battles were fought again and again, until at length he reached the middle ground of modern thought. His education was extremely desultory; but from the age of nine, when from the only models within his reach he wrote hymns and sermons, he showed a strong tendency for literature. He passed the required examinations for a school-teacher in 1870, and alternately taught and studied, until in 1875 he entered the University of Christiania. His life as a student was by no means smooth, but he persisted, in spite of poverty and indeed sometimes actual want.

He had previously, in Risör, published a Teacher's Journal (1871), a small paper dealing principally though not exclusively with school affairs; and a year later, in Tvedestrand, he established the Tvedestrand Post. This experience as county editor and printer had qualified him for newspaper work, and in 1877 he became connected with the Aftenbladet of Christiania. The same year he founded the Fedraheimen, «a weekly paper for the Norse people.» This was really the beginning of his literary career, although besides his early enterprises in journalism he had as a student contributed occasional articles to the newspapers, and had already published his first book, a critical essay on Ibsen's ‹Emperor and Galilean.›

The attempt made by Ivar Aasen to establish in Norway a national language through a normalization of the peasant dialects, found in Garborg one of its warmest supporters. Discarding Danish as a literary medium, he advocated the use of the strong Norse, and the Fedraheimen appeared as the organ of the new movement. Garborg wrote a book upon the subject in the year after the establishment of his journal, and ever since, by precept and practice, he has been the chief propagandist of the new speech.

His first novel, ‹En Fritenkjar› (A Freethinker), appeared anonymously in the Fedraheimen in 1878. The subject of the story was one of the vital questions of the day, the conflict between iron-bound dogmatism and rational thought; a theme now threadbare with much handling, but then startlingly new. The author's early training and his own environment of intolerant theology supplied material for the story. The hero of the tale, the man who dared to think for himself, was looked upon as a criminal, to be ranked with house-breakers and thieves. The ostracism which he brought upon himself was but the just punishment for his crimes. The Freethinker, treated as a moral leper, is driven from his home and goes abroad to expiate his sin of unorthodoxy. In later years he returns to his native land, to find most of his acquaintances dead. Of his family only one still lives, and that is his son, who has become a clergyman!

Garborg's second romance, ‹Bondestudentar› (Peasant Students) (1883), deals with a problem no less real. In Norway, although there is no rank of nobility, class distinctions are nevertheless strongly marked; and in this novel his pen is directed against the evils which result from the inordinate striving of the lower orders for a position to which they are unfitted both by nature and circumstances. This book, again, is to a degree autobiographical; for Garborg, as has been said, is himself peasant, and he has fought the fight and suffered the anguish of the new culture attained with incalculable sacrifice. ‹Peasant Students› is undoubtedly his greatest work. Nowhere else has he indicated more clearly his seriousness of purpose, or worked out his theme with more effectiveness. The hero, Daniel Braut, is the representative of the ideal student, a son of the people who shall strive for «poetry and the soul» and introduce the elements of culture among his class. Manual labor is his aversion; and at last, forced by the weakness of his nature and the necessity of his poverty, he goes over to the ranks of philistinism, marries a woman of property, and studies theology. Both books are stories of high ideals and humiliating compromises. The author's pessimism is in the ascendant, and in the end the lower nature conquers.

In ‹Mannfolk› (1886) he takes up a different theme, the relation of the sexes, a question which he treats with startling frankness. Garborg is a realist in so far that he prefers to depict life as it is, well knowing that fiction cannot approach truth in point of interest. He bears true testimony of what he sees and knows, but his realism is very far removed from the naturalism of the French school.

Following ‹Peasant Students› appeared in 1884 ‹Forteljinger og Sogar› (Narratives and Tales), a volume of stories dealing sometimes with subjects generally proscribed. Of his other works the most important are the narrative ‹Hjaa ho Mor› (With Mama), ‹Kolbotnbrev og andre Skildringar› (Kolbotn Letters and Other Sketches: 1890), the novels ‹Trætte Mænd› (Weary Souls: 1891), ‹Fred› (Peace: 1893), and the drama ‹Uforsonlige› (The Irreconcilables: 1888).

After being deprived of his government position upon the publication of ‹Mannfolk,› Arne Garborg retired with his wife and child into the solitude of the mountains, where for two years he lived and wrote in his sæter hut; but at last, overcome by the loneliness of this isolated life, he left Norway and settled in Germany.

THE CONFLICT OF THE CREEDS

From ‹A Freethinker›

THE noise of carriage wheels increased. The carriage drove up before the door, and all the people of the parsonage sprang up in joy. Ragna however reddened somewhat. A minute after, both Hans Vangen and Eystein Hauk stood in the room. Hans embraced his parents and his sister, and on the surface was happy; Hauk greeted them kindly and warmly like an acquaintance of the family, and bowed deep before Ragna.

« A good evening to you, and a merry Christmas-time!" called out Hans. «Here is the great foreign traveler and wise man Eystein Hauk, and here» — he pointed to the chaplain — «is the strict man of God, Balle; chaplain now, pastor later on, finally bishop; a well-founded theologian and a true support to the Church in these distracted times. It will be well with you if you do not fall into a quarrel about belief.»

There was talking and laughing; the pastor's wife poured out wine; the new-comers sat down; the table was quickly set, and then they went into the dining-room, where Christmas grits and Christmas fish stood smoking in a great dish and « awaited the help of the people.» The pastor read a blessing, which was not listened to with any further devoutness. Ragna and Balle sat for the most part and looked at Hauk, but Hauk looked at Ragna, and the pastor's wife said of Hans how he had grown during the past year, and how his good looks and his affability had improved.

The one who talked most at the table was Hans. Hauk was rather silent. The pastor asked him in a few words about his travels abroad; he answered promptly but shortly, and often in such a cleverly turned way of speaking that it was difficult to find out his real meaning.

The chaplain, too, would have liked to hear about foreign lands. What was the state of the Christian religion in France? —Well, it was various. It was there as here: there were people of all sorts.—But was not the great majority unchristian?—Well, of enlightened and learned people it was, to be sure, the smallest part who strictly could be called Christians.—But with morals? Was there not a great deal of social viciousness and impropriety?—Well, if it were only considered under certain conditions, in certain cities, it was probably there as in other places.—Indeed!—Balle, rebuffed, looked away from Hauk, and did not talk with him afterward.

When they left the table there was set out dessert, with wine, and pipes were also brought. The conversation went on as before, but it was none the less Hans who talked most. He was a fresh, happy fellow. His mother sat and found pleasure in looking at him. The pastor and Balle sat and smoked, glanced now and then at Hauk, who was a little way off at a smaller table, talking small-talk with Ragna. The pastor had become more silent, and Balle looked as if he little liked the state of things, although he tried to control himself. Hans understood this, and laughed.

« Do not bother yourself about Hauk,» said he. « He has been in Paris and has learned French manners, and consequently he likes women's society best; but even if he is a little grand, he will quickly become Norse again, keep to his pipe and his glass, and let the women take care of themselves."

Balle bit his lips; the pastor smiled a little. "Young people are more bashful here in Norway," said he. "That is true," he continued. "You have read the new novel 'Virginia,' that the people have waited so long for?"

"'Virginia'?—pfh! that is a vile book," answered Hans, and smiled.

"Vile?" said the chaplain questioningly.

"It is a scandalous book! says Christiania. It has set the whole town on end. It works destruction upon marriage, they say; upon morals, upon society. I have never seen Christiania so moral as in these days."

"H'm!" said Balle; "Christiania is on the whole a moral town."

"It is at this time! The young poets are happy for all the days of their life. The men forbid the women to read the book, and the women forbid their daughters—"

"And so they all read it together?" said the pastor.

"Certainly! The women read it and say, 'Paugh! the poets do not know life.' The daughters, the poor dear angels, they read it and say, 'Dear me, is that anything? Have we not read worse books than that?'"

"But tell us, then, what the book is about?" said the pastor.

"It is about—that married people shall love each other," said Hans stoutly.

"Oho! free love!" called out the chaplain.

"Certainly! Free love! 'All true love is free,' says the foolhardy fellow of a poet."

"Do you hear that, pastor?" said Balle.

"If our own poets also take it up, let us have a care! Then he recognizes 'free thought'; and what then?" asked the chaplain.

"That is true," replied Hans. "'All thoughts are free,' he says, 'and not merely duty free.'"

"Of course he does not believe in God?"

"I doubt it; but even that is not the worst."

"Not the—"

"No, for there are many people in Christiania who do not believe in God. But these poets do not even believe in the

Devil!» Hans laughed like a child at the face that the chaplain made; the pastor looked severely at Hans, who cast down his eyes and was silent.

«Worthless fruit,» sighed the chaplain. «Our poets have hitherto kept themselves free from these godless thoughts, even if they have not always had the right opinion of Christianity, and particularly have taken up with the confusions of Grundtvigianism; but now, now it has taken another path. Do you see the spirit of revolt, pastor? Do you hear how they rise and tear asunder all its bonds; how opposition arises against all that is high and holy, and they storm even against the foundations of society?»

«May God help us!» sighed the pastor. «It does not look right. Is there anything new in the newspapers?» he asked, as if to get away from a conversation that plainly oppressed him.

Hans ran out, and came quickly in again with the newspapers. Such of these as were French he took for himself, the rest he gave to Balle.

«Do you see, father?» said Hans with the mien of a schoolmaster. «If you will have politics, you must turn to France. All other politics are merely an echo of theirs. France is Europe. France is the world!»

«Do you hear, pastor?» said Balle. «Do you hear how the French spirit spreads and increases in power? the French spirit, which has always been one and the same with rationalism and revolution?»

«Here is an article that will do Balle good!» called out Hans. «It does not assume the good tone or prattle tediously like our Norse newspaper articles. There is fire and burning in it; you recognize something like a clenched fist back of the words, prepared for everything upon which it may hit. That is what I call politics!»

«Oh, you are a foolish fellow,» said the pastor. «Come, out with it!»

Hans read an article against the priestly party or clericals, and the piece was severely radical. It was particularly to the effect that the clergy and Christianity must be ousted from the public schools, if thinkers were to be really for a genuine and sound popular education. Christianity had already done what it could do; hereafter it lay merely in the way. «Freedom and self-government» was the war-cry now, for this generation. They might be fair enough, many of the dreams which the new time compelled us to abandon; but light and life and truth were ten times fairer than all dreams.

The chaplain sat and sulked, and looked into one of the Norse papers. «Here stands the same,» said he. «No, but—? Yes, the same, and yet not the same. The Norse paper has cut out or changed all that treats directly of Christianity; the rest is the same.»

«Ha, ha, ha!» laughed Hans.

«Yes, they are as wise as serpents,» sighed the chaplain. «Here may plainly be seen how the matter stands. It is hidden away in politics, but the spirit they cannot conceal; it is precisely the same French spirit of hell, the spirit of revolt, the spirit of the Devil, which lifts itself against even the living God. Do you see that, pastor? Do you see how wholly these 'freedom politics,' as they are called, are held up and impregnated with this godless spirit of revolt? In truth, it becomes more and more clear that it is the part of us, the watchmen of Zion,—more now than ever before,—to watch and pray.»

The pastor sat and meditated. He looked oppressed and sorrowful. It was too quiet for Hans: he moved away to Hauk and Ragna. The chaplain appeared to like this, and became more calm.

«Dear pastor,» said he after a while, «just as surely as there is truth in our work,—yes, this question presses itself more and more in upon me,—as surely as there is truth in our work: that we shall watch over God's house and people,—we *cannot* remain silent and be calm when we see a spirit like this coming bearing in upon us—a spirit which is directly founded upon heathenism, and so plainly shows its Satanic origin. Shall it be? Can we answer for that before our Lord and God?»

The pastor was silent. He was in great doubt and uncertainty of mind. «I do not believe that it is right to bring politics into the house of God,» said he at last.

«Politics, no! But this is not politics; this is a spirit of the times, a view of life which takes the outward garb of politics, but at the bottom is merely a new outbreak of the same old heathenism that the Church at all times has had to contend with. I, for my part, do not believe that I can keep silent with a quiet conscience.»

The pastor held his peace and thought. «This is a hard question,» he said finally. «May our Lord give us wisdom!»

«Amen,» said the chaplain. . . .

That night the old pastor did not sleep well. He walked up and down his chamber and thought. «When it comes to the point,» said he to himself, «Balle is right; there *is* something bad and evil in the spirit of the time; there *is* something devilish. Merely look, now, at this Eystein Hauk, this clever fine fellow: he is not to be got at. He is frozen to ice and hardened to steel, slippery and smooth as a serpent. There came such an uncanny spirit from him that he made me downright sick: no respect, no veneration even for his own father; God knows how he can hold fast to his Christian faith. They call it freedom, humanity; but it is not that. It is hate, venom, bad blood.—They will tear from them all bonds, as Balle says, raise a revolt—revolt against all that is beautiful and good, against God, against belief. H'm! Build the State, this whole earthly life, upon a heathen foundation! Sever connection with Christianity, cast the Church away from them like old trash. That is terrible! And free love, free thought—the Christian religion out of the schools—no! that is Satan himself who rages. Free thoughts in my time were not so: they were warm and beautiful; there was heart in them; they made us good and happy.» He shook himself, as if to throw off a chill. Should one be silent at such things? Should one look quietly on while this evil spirit eats itself in among the people? or should one, like a disciple of God, lift up the sword of the Word and the Spirit against this poisonous basilisk?

He read in the Bible and in Luther. Then he got up again and walked. The clock struck hour after hour, but the old man did not hear it. He thought only of the heavy responsibility. Was it not to profane the house of God and the holy office, to drag the struggle and strife of the day into it? Was he not set to watch over word and teaching, but not to be a judge in the world's disputes? But of his flock, the people of the Church, the Bride of Christ, whom he should watch, but who stood in the midst of a wicked world, and whose souls were harmed when such evil gusts blew? Would not every soul at the Judgment Day be demanded at his hands? And was he a good shepherd, who indeed kept watch against the wolf when the wolf came having on his right garb, but looked on and was silent when he came clothed in sheep's garments and pretended to belong among the good? He read anew in Luther. At last he knelt down and prayed for a long time, and ended with a fervent and heartfelt « Our Father.»

Then he arose as if freed from doubt, looked meekly up to heaven, and said, « As thou wilt, O Lord!» He seated himself in his arm-chair, weary but happy, and fell asleep for a while. Presently, however, the day grew gray in the east and he awoke. He read the morning prayers to himself, chose his text, and thought about the sermon. When the bell began to ring he went to church. He was pale, but calm and kindly. The farmers looked at him and greeted him more warmly than usual. The pastor's wife and Ragna came shortly after; Hans and Eystein did not arrive at the church until the pastor stood in the pulpit.

The Christmas sermon was fervid and good. He spoke about the angels' song, « Peace on earth.» They had seldom heard the old man preach so well. But at the end came a turn in the thought that caused some astonishment. It was about politics.

« Dear Christians,» he said, « how is it in our days with ‘peace on earth’? Ah, my brothers, we know that all too well. Peace has gone from us. It has vanished like a beautiful evening cloud. Evil powers rise up in these hours. The Devil is abroad, and tempts anew mankind to eat of the tree of knowledge and to tear themselves loose from God. Take heed, take heed, dear brothers! Take heed of the false prophets, who proclaim a new gospel and promise you ‘freedom’ and ‘enlightenment,’ and all that is good,—yes, promise you righteousness and power, if you will eat of the forbidden tree. They give themselves out for sheep, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. They promise you freedom, but they give you thraldom, the thraldom of sin, which is the worst of all. They promise you blessings and joy, but they steal you away from Him who alone has blessings and freedom for our poor race. They promise you security and defense against all tyranny and oppression, but they give you gladly into his power who is the father of all tyranny and of all evil; he who is the destroyer of man from the beginning. Dear Christians, let us watch and pray! Let us prove the spirit, whether it is from God! Let us harden our ears and our hearts against false voices and magic songs that deceive, which come to us out of the dark chasms and abysses in this wicked world!

Let us be fearful of this wild and sinful thought of freedom, that from Adam down has been the deep and true source of all our woe! Let us pray for ‘peace on earth,’ for only then can our Lord God have consideration for mankind.” With this he ended his sermon.

Translated for ‘A Library of the World’s Best Literature,’ by William H. Carpenter

HAMLIN GARLAND

(1860–)

Hamlin Garland is a favorable example of a class of young writers which is coming to the fore in the Middle West of the United States,—fresh, original, full of faith and energy, with a robust and somewhat aggressive Americanism. In native endowment he is a strong man, and his personal character is manly, clean, and high. At times, carelessness of technique and lack of taste can be detected in his writings, but his strength and spirit make amends for these defects.

Hamlin Garland

Mr. Garland was born September 16th, 1860, in the La Crosse Valley, Wisconsin. His family is of Scotch descent,—sturdy farmer folk, remarkable for their physical powers. His maternal grandfather was an Adventist, with the touch of mysticism that word implies. Garland was reared in the picturesque coulé country (French *coulée*, a dry gulch); living in various Western towns, one of them being the Quaker community of Hesper, Iowa. His early education was received from the local schools; the unconscious assimilation of the Western ways came while he rode horses, herded cattle, and led the wholesome, simple open-air life of the middle-class people. Some years were spent in a small seminary at Osage, Wisconsin, whence he was graduated at twenty-one years of age. His kin moved to Dakota, but Hamlin faced Eastward, eager to see the world. Two years of travel and teaching in Illinois found him in 1883 «holding down» a Dakota claim — the only result of the land boom being a rich field of literary ore. Then in 1884 he went to Boston, made his headquarters at the Public Library, read diligently, taught literature and elocution in the School of Oratory, and became one of the literary workers there, remaining until 1891. Since then he has lectured much throughout the country, and has settled in Chicago, his summer home being at West Salem, Wisconsin, in the beautiful coulé region of his boyhood.

Mr. Garland's main work is in fiction, but he has also tried his hand at verse and the essay. His volume ‹Crumbling Idols,› published in 1894, a series of audacious papers in which the doctrine of realism is cried up and the appeal to past literary canons made a mock of, called out critical abuse and ridicule, and no doubt shows a lack of perspective. Yet the book is racy and stimulating in the extreme. The volume of poetry, ‘Prairie Songs’ (1893), has the merit of dealing picturesquely and at first hand with Western scenery and life, and contains many a stroke of imaginative beauty. Of the half-dozen books of tales and longer stories, ‘Main-Traveled Roads,’ Mr. Garland's first collection of short stories, including work as striking as anything he has done, gives vivid pastoral pictures of the Mississippi Valley life. ‘A Little Norsk’ (1893), along with its realism in sketching frontier scenes, possesses a fine romantic flavor. And ‘Rose of Dutcher's Coolly’ (1895), decidedly his strongest full-length fiction, is a delineation of Wisconsin rustic and urban life, including a study of Chicago, daringly unconventional, but strong, earnest, evidently drawn from the author's deepest experiences and convictions. Other books of fiction are ‘Jason Edwards,’ ‘A Member of the Third House,’ ‘A Spoil of Office,’ and ‘Prairie Folks.’

Mr. Garland's work in its increasing command of art, its understanding of and sincere sympathy with the life of the great toiling population of the Middle West, and its unmistakable qualities of independence, vigor, and ideality, is worthy of warm praise. A rich, large nature is felt beneath his fiction. His literary creed is «truth for truth's sake,» and his conception of his art is broad enough to include love of country and belief in his fellow-man.

A SUMMER MOOD

From ‘Prairie Songs.’ Copyright 1893 by Hamlin Garland, and published by Stone & Kimball

Oh, to be lost in the wind and the sun,
To be one with the wind and the stream!
With never a care while the waters run,
With never a thought in my dream.
To be part of the robin's lilting call
And part of the bobolink's rhyme.
Lying close to the shy thrush singing alone,
And lapped in the cricket's chime!

Oh, to live with these beautiful ones!
With the lust and the glory of man
Lost in the circuit of springtime suns—
Submissive as earth and part of her plan;
To lie as the snake lies, content in the grass!
To drift as the clouds drift, effortless, free,
Glad of the power that drives them on,
With never a question of wind or sea.

A STORM ON LAKE MICHIGAN

From ‹Rose of Dutcher's Coolly.› Copyright 1895 by Hamlin Garland, and published by Stone & Kimball

As the winter deepened, Rose narrowed the circle of conquest. She no longer thought of conquering the world; it came to be the question of winning the approbation of one human soul. That is, she wished to win the approbation of the world in order that Warren Mason might smile and say «Well done!»

She did not reach this state of mind smoothly and easily. On the contrary, she had moments when she rebelled at the thought of any man's opinion being the greatest good in the world to her. She rebelled at the implied inferiority of her position in relation to him, and also at the physical bondage implied. In the morning, when she was strong, in the midst of some social success, when people swarmed about her and men bent deferentially, then she held herself like a soldier on a tower, defying capture.

But at night, when the lights were all out, when she felt her essential loneliness and weakness and need, when the world seemed cold and cruel and selfish,— then it seemed as if the sweetest thing in the universe would be to have him open his arms and say «Come!»

There would be rest there, and repose. His judgment, his keen wit, his penetrating, powerful influence, made him seem a giant to her; a giant who disdained effort and gave out an appearance of indifference and lassitude. She had known physical giants in her neighborhood, who spoke in soft drawl and slouched lazily in action, but who were invincible when aroused.

She imagined she perceived in Mason a mental giant, who assumed irresolution and weakness for reasons of his own. He was always off duty when she saw him, and bent more upon rest than a display of power. Once or twice she saw him roused, and it thrilled her; that measured lazy roll of voice changed to a quick, stern snarl, the brows lowered, and the big plump face took on battle lines. It was like a seemingly shallow pool, suddenly disclosed to be of soundless depths by a wind of passion.

The lake had been the refuge of the distracted and restless girl. She went to it often in the autumn days, for it rested her from the noise of grinding wheels, and screams, and yells.

Its smooth rise and fall, its sparkle of white-caps, its sailing gulls, filled her with delicious pleasure. It soothed her and it roused her also. It gave her time to think.

The street disturbed her, left her purposeless and powerless; but out there where the ships floated like shadows, and shadows shifted like flame, and the wind was keen and sweet,—there she could get her mental breath again. She watched it change to wintry desolation, till it grew empty of vessels and was lonely as the Arctic Sea; and always it was grand and thought-inspiring.

She went out one day in March, when the home longing was upon her and when it seemed that the city would be her death. She was tired of her food, tired of Mary, tired of her room. Her forehead was knotted tensely with pain of life and love—

She cried out with sudden joy, for she had never seen the lake more beautiful. Near the shore a great mass of churned and heaving ice and snow lay like a robe of shaggy fur. Beyond this the deep water spread, a vivid pea-green broken by wide irregular strips of dark purple. In the open water by the wall a spatter of steel blue lay like the petals of some strange flower, scattered upon the green.

Great splendid clouds developed, marvelously like the clouds of June, making the girl's heart swell with memories of summer. They were white as wool, these mountainous clouds, and bottomed in violet, and as they passed the snow-fields they sent down pink-purple misty shadows, which trailed away in splendor toward the green which flamed in bewildering beauty beyond. The girl sat like one in a dream, while the wind blew the green and purple of the outer sea into fantastic, flitting forms which dazzled her eyes like the stream of mingled banners.

Each form seemed more beautiful than the preceding one; each combination had such unearthly radiance, her heart ached with exquisite sorrow to see it vanish. The girl felt that spring was coming on the wing of the southern wind, and the desire to utter her passion grew almost into pain.

It had other moods, this mighty spread of water. It could be angry, dangerous. Sometimes it rolled sullenly, and convoluted in oily surges beneath its coverlid of snow, like a bed of monstrous serpents. Sometimes the leaden sky shut down over it, and from the desolate northeast a snow-storm rushed, hissing and howling. Sometimes it slumbered for days, quiet as a sleeping boa, then awoke and was a presence and a voice in the night, fit to make the hardiest tremble.

Rose saw it when it was roused, but she had yet to see it in a frenzy. The knowledge of its worst came to her early in May, just before her return to the Coulé.

The day broke with the wind in the northeast. Rose, lying in her bed, could hear the roar of the lake; never before had its voice penetrated so far. She sprang up and dressed, eager to see it in such a mood. Mary responded sleepily to her call, saying the lake would be there after breakfast.

Rose did not regret her eagerness, though it was piercingly cold and raw. The sea was already terrific. Its spread of tawny yellow showed how it had reached down and laid hold on the sand of its bed. There were oily splotches of plum color scattered over it where the wind blew it smooth, and it reached to the wild east sky, cold, desolate, destructive.

It had a fierce, breathing snarl like a monster at meat. It leaped against the sea-wall like a rabid tiger, its sleek and spotted hide rolling. Every surge sent a triangular sheet of foam twenty-five feet above the wall, yellow and white and shadowed with dull blue; and the wind caught it as it rose, and its crest burst into great clouds of spray, which sailed across the streets and dashed along the walk like rain, making the roadway like a river; while the main body of each upleaping wave, falling back astride the wall, crashed like the fall of glass, and the next wave met it with a growl of thunderous rage, striking it with concave palm with a sound like a cannon's exploding roar.

Out of the appalling obscurity to the north, frightened ships scudded at intervals, with bare masts bending like fire-trimmed pines. They hastened like the homing pigeons, which do not look behind. The helmsmen stood grimly at their wheels, with eyes on the harbor ahead.

The girl felt it all as no one native to the sea can possibly do. It seemed as if the bounds of the flood had been overcome, and that it was about to hurl itself upon the land. The slender trees, standing deep in the swash of water, bowed like women in pain; the wall was half hidden, and the flood and the land seemed mingled in battle.

Rose walked along the shore, too much excited to go back to her breakfast. At noon she ate lunch hurriedly and returned to the shore. There were hundreds of people coming and going along the drive; young girls shrieking with glee, as the sailing clouds of spray fell upon them. Rose felt angry to think they could be so silly in face of such dreadful power.

She came upon Mason, dressed in a thick mackintosh coat, taking notes rapidly in a little book. He did not look up, and she passed him, wishing to speak, yet afraid to speak. Near him a young man was sketching.

Mason stood like a rock in his long, close-fitting rain coat, while she was blown nearly off her feet by the blast. She came back against the wind, feeling her soul's internal storm rising. It seemed quite like a proposal of marriage to go up and speak to him — yet she could not forego the pleasure.

He did not see her until she came into his lee; then he smiled, extending his hand. She spoke first:—

« May I take shelter here? »

His eyes lightened with a sudden tender humor.

« Free anchorage, » he said, and drew her by the hand closer to his shoulder. It was a beautiful moment to her, and a dangerous one to him. He took refuge in outside matters.

« How does that strike your inland eyes? » He pointed to the north.

« It's awful. It's like the anger of God. » She spoke into his bowed ear.

« Please don't think I'm reporting it, » he explained. « I'm only making a few notes about it for an editorial on the need of harbors. »

Each moment the fury increased, the waves deepened. The commotion sank down amid the sands of the deeper inshore water, and it boiled like milk. Splendid colors grew into it near at hand; the winds tore at the tops of the waves, and wove them into tawny banners, which blurred the air like blown sand. On the horizon the waves leaped in savage ranks, clutching at the sky like insane sea monsters,— frantic, futile.

« I've seen the Atlantic twice during a gale, » shouted the artist to a companion, « but I never saw anything more awful than this. These waves are quicker and higher. I don't see how a vessel could live in it if caught broadside. »

« It's the worst I ever saw here. »

« I'm going down to the south side: would you like to go? » Mason asked of Rose.

« I would indeed, » she replied.

Back from the lake shore the wind was less powerful but more uncertain. It came in gusts which nearly upturned the street cars. Men and women scudded from shelter to shelter, like beleaguered citizens avoiding cannon shots.

« What makes our lake so terrible,» said Mason in the car, « is the fact that it has a smooth shore — no indentations, no harbors. There is only one harbor here at Chicago, behind the breakwater, and every vessel in mid-lake must come here. Those flying ships are seeking safety here like birds. The harbor will be full of disabled vessels.»

As they left the car, a roaring gust swept around a twenty-story building with such power [that] Rose would have been taken off her feet had not Mason put his arms about her shoulders.

« You're at a disadvantage,» he said, « with skirts.» He knew she prided herself on her strength, and he took no credit to himself for standing where she fell.

It was precisely as if they were alone together; the storm seemed to wall them in, and his manner was more intimate than ever before. It was in very truth the first time they had been out together, and also it was the only time he had assumed any physical care of her. He had never asserted his greater muscular power and mastery of material things, and she was amazed to see that his lethargy was only a mood. He could be alert and agile at need. It made his cynicism appear to be a mood also; at least, it made her heart wondrously light to think so.

They came upon the lake shore again, near the Auditorium. The refuge behind the breakwater was full of boats, straining at anchor, rolling, pitching, crashing together. Close about the edge of the breakwater, ships were rounding hurriedly, and two broken vessels lay against the shore, threshing up and down in the awful grasp of the breakers. Far down toward the south the water dashed against the spiles, shooting fifty feet above the wall, sailing like smoke, deluging the street, and lashing against the row of buildings across the way.

Mason's keen eye took in the situation:—

« Every vessel that breaks anchor is doomed! Nothing can keep them from going on shore. Doubtless those two schooners lost anchor — that one there is dragging anchor.» He said suddenly, « She is shifting position, and see that hulk — »

Rose for a moment could not see it. She lay flat on her side, a two-master, her sails flapping and floating on the waves. Her anchor still held, but she had listed her cargo, careened, and so lay helpless.

"There are men on it!" cried some one. "Three men — don't you see them? The water goes over them every time!"

"Sure enough! I wonder if they are going to let them drown, here in the harbor!"

Rose grew numb with horror. On the rounded side of the floating hulk three men were clinging, looking like pegs of tops. They could only be seen at intervals, for the water broke clear over their heads. It was only when one of them began to move to and fro that the mighty crowd became certainly aware of life still clinging to the hull. It was an awful thing to stand helplessly by and see those brave men battle, but no life-boat or tug could live out there. In the station, men wept and imprecated in their despair; twice they tried to go to the rescue of the beleaguered men, but could not reach them.

Suddenly a flare of yellow spread out on the wave. A cry arose: —

"She's breaking up!"

Rose seized Mason's arm in a frenzy of horror.

"O God! can't somebody help them?"

"They're out of reach!" said Mason solemnly. And then the throng was silent.

"They are building a raft!" shouted a man with a glass, speaking at intervals for the information of all. "One man is tying a rope to planks; . . . he is helping the other men; . . . he has his little raft nearly ready; . . . they are crawling toward him — "

"Oh, see them!" exclaimed Rose. "Oh, the brave men! There! they are gone — the vessel has broken up."

On the wave nothing now lived but a yellow spread of lumber; the glass revealed no living thing.

Mason turned to Rose with a grave and tender look.

"You have seen human beings engulfed like flies — "

"No! no! There they are!" shouted a hundred voices, as if in answer to Mason's thought.

Thereafter the whole great city seemed to be watching those specks of human life, drifting toward almost certain death upon the breakwater of the south shore. For miles the beach was clustered black with people. They stood there, it seemed for hours, watching the slow approach of that tiny raft. Again and again the waves swept over it, and each time that indomitable man rose from the flood and was seen to pull his companions aboard.

Other vessels drifted upon the rocks. Other steamers rolled heavily around the long breakwater, but nothing now distracted the gaze of the multitude from this appalling and amazing struggle against death. Nothing? No; once and only once did the onlookers shift their intent gaze, and that was when a vessel passed the breakwater and went sailing toward the south through the fleet of anchored, straining, agonized ships. At first no one paid much attention to this late-comer till Mason lifted his voice.

"By Heaven, the man is *sailing!*"

It was true; steady, swift, undeviating, the vessel headed through the fleet. She did not drift nor wander nor hesitate. She sailed as if the helmsman, with set teeth, were saying:—

"By God! If I must die on the rocks, I'll go to my death the captain of my vessel!"

And so with wheel in his hand and epic oaths in his mouth, he sailed directly into the long row of spiles, over which the waves ran like hell-hounds; where half a score of wrecks lay already churning into fragments in the awful tumult.

The sailing vessel seemed not to waver, nor seek nor dodge—seemed rather to choose the most deadly battle-place of waves and wall.

"God! but that's magnificent of him!" Mason said to himself.

Rose held her breath, her face white and set with horror.

"Oh, must he die?"

"There is no hope for him. She will strike in a moment—she strikes!—she is gone!"

The vessel entered the gray confusion of the breakers and struck the piles like a battering-ram; the waves buried her from sight; then the recoil flung her back; for the first time she swung broadside to the storm. The work of the helmsman was over. She reeled—resisted an instant, then submitted to her fate, crumbled against the pitiless wall like paper, and thereafter was lost to sight.

This dramatic and terrible scene had held the attention of the onlookers—once more they searched for the tiny raft. It was nearing the lake wall at another furious point of contact. An innumerable crowd spread like a black robe over the shore, waiting to see the tiny float strike.

A hush fell over every voice. Each soul was solemn as if facing the Maker of the world. Out on the point, just where the doomed sailors seemed like to strike, there was a little commotion. A tiny figure was seen perched on one of the spiles. Each wave, as it towered above him, seemed ready to sweep him away, but each time he bowed his head and seemed to sweep through the gray wall. He was a negro, and he held a rope in his hands.

As they comprehended his danger the crowd cheered him, but in the thunder of the surf no human voice could avail. The bold negro could not cry out, he could only motion; but the brave man on the raft saw his purpose — he was alone with the shipwrecked ones.

In they came, lifted and hurled by a prodigious swell. They struck the wall just beneath the negro and disappeared beneath the waves.

All seemed over, and some of the spectators fell weeping; others turned away.

Suddenly the indomitable commander of the raft rose, then his companions, and then it was perceived that he had bound them all to the raft.

The negro flung his rope and one man caught at it, but it was swept out of reach on a backward-leaping billow. Again they came in, their white, strained, set faces and wild eyes turned to the intrepid rescuer. Again they struck, and this time the negro caught and held one of the sailors, held him while the foam fell away, and the succeeding wave swept him over the spiles to safety. Again the resolute man flung his noose and caught the second sailor, whose rope was cut by the leader, the captain, who was last to be saved.

As the negro came back, dragging his third man over the wall, a mighty cry went up, a strange, faint, multitudinous cry, and the negro was swallowed up in the multitude. . . .

Mason turned to Rose and spoke: « Sometimes men seem to be worth while! »

ELIZABETH STEVENSON GASKELL

(1810–1865)

Critics agree in placing the novels of Mrs. Gaskell on a level with the works of Jane Austen and Charlotte Brontë. It is more than probable that future generations will turn to her stories for correct pictures of simple every-day life that must fade in the swift succession of years. She has been compared to a naturalist who knows intimately the flora and fauna of his native heath.

Elizabeth S. Gaskell

Elizabeth Cleghorn Stevenson was born in Chelsea, England, September 29th, 1810, the daughter of William Stevenson, a literary man, who was keeper of the records of the Treasury. She lived with her aunt at Knutsford in Cheshire, was sent to a private school in Stratford-on-Avon, and visited London and Edinburgh, where her beauty was much admired. In 1832 she was married to the Rev. William Gaskell, minister of a Unitarian chapel in Manchester. Mrs. Gaskell did not begin to write until she had reached middle age, and then chiefly to distract her thoughts after the death of their only son in 1844. Her first book, ‘Mary Barton,’ published anonymously in 1848, achieved extraordinary success. This was a «novel with a purpose,» for Mrs. Gaskell believed that the hostility between employers and employed, which constantly disturbed the manufacturing beehive of Manchester, was caused by mutual ignorance. She therefore set herself the task of depicting faithfully the lives of the people around her. It must be remembered, too, that the social types chosen by her were at that moment peculiarly interesting to a public weary of the novel of fashionable high life. The story provoked much public discussion; and among other critics, the social economist Mr. W. R. Greg, in his ‘Essay on Mary Barton,’ published in 1849, took the part of the manufacturer. ‘Mary Barton’ has been translated into French, German, and other languages, including Hungarian and Finnish. The story has for its central theme the gradual degeneration of John Barton, a workman who has a passionate hatred of the classes above him, and who, embittered by poverty and the death of his son and wife, joins the law-breakers of the town, and finally murders Henry Corson, a master manufacturer. ‘North and South,’ published in 1855, was written from the point of view of the masters, an admirable contrast to Barton being found in Thornton, the hero of this novel.

In 1850, when Dickens was about to establish Household Words, he invited Mrs. Gaskell to contribute. This magazine contained her story ‘Lizzie Leigh’ and those immortal pictures of village life known as ‘Cranford.’ Mrs. Gaskell's other novels are: ‘Ruth,’ the tragical story of a pretty young milliner's apprentice; ‘Sylvia's Lovers,’ whose scene is Monkhaven (Whitby), at the end of the last century; ‘Cousin Phillis,’ a simple story of a farmer's daughter, which appeared first in the Cornhill Magazine in 1863-64; and ‘Wives and Daughters,’ also contributed to the Cornhill, and left unfinished by her death in Manchester, November 12th, 1865. By many persons the last novel is considered her best work, owing to its strength of characterization. Molly Gibson, the heroine; Cynthia, a heartless coquette; Squire Hamley and his sons Roger and Osborne, of Hamley Hall; and the Earl of Cumnor and his family at the Towers,—all are treated with impartial skill. Her famous ‘Life of Charlotte Brontë’ appeared in 1857. She became acquainted with Miss Brontë in 1850, and they were friends at once.

A collected edition of Mrs. Gaskell's works, published in seven volumes in 1873, includes the short stories ‘The Grey Woman,’ ‘Morton Hall,’ ‘Mr. Harrison's Confessions,’ ‘A Dark Night's Work,’ ‘The Moorland Cottage,’ ‘Round the Sofa,’ ‘The Old Nurse's Story,’ ‘The Well of Pen-Morfa,’ ‘The Sexton's Hero,’ ‘Lois the Witch,’ and others. Cranford is identified as the town of Knutsford. Its population consists of widows and maiden ladies, in bonds to their ancient gentility. With deft touch Mrs. Gaskell brings out the humor and pathos of these quaint characters, her finest creation being Miss Matty Jenkyns.

OUR SOCIETY

From ‘Cranford’

IN THE first place, Cranford is in possession of the Amazons; all the holders of houses, above a certain rent, are women. If a married couple come to settle in the town, somehow the gentleman disappears; he is either fairly frightened to death by being the only man in the Cranford evening parties, or he is accounted for by being with his regiment, his ship, or closely engaged in business all the week in the great neighboring commercial town of Drumble, distant only twenty miles on a railroad.

In short, whatever does become of the gentlemen, they are not at Cranford. What could they do if they were there? The surgeon has his round of thirty miles, and sleeps at Cranford; but every man cannot be a surgeon. For keeping the trim gardens full of choice flowers without a weed to speck them; for frightening away little boys who look wistfully at the said flowers through the railings; for rushing out at the geese that occasionally venture into the gardens if the gates are left open; for deciding all questions of literature and politics without troubling themselves with unnecessary reasons or arguments; for obtaining clear and correct knowledge of everybody's affairs in the parish; for keeping their neat maid-servants in admirable order; for kindness (somewhat dictatorial) to the poor, and real tender good offices to each other whenever they are in distress,—the ladies of Cranford are quite sufficient. "A man," as one of them observed to me once, "is *so* in the way in the house!" Although the ladies of Cranford know all each other's proceedings, they are exceedingly indifferent to each other's opinions. Indeed, as each has her own individuality, not to say eccentricity, pretty strongly developed, nothing is so easy as verbal retaliation; but somehow, good-will reigns among them to a considerable degree.

The Cranford ladies have only an occasional little quarrel, spurted out in a few peppery words and angry jerks of the heads; just enough to prevent the even tenor of their lives from becoming too flat. Their dress is very independent of fashion: as they observe, "What does it signify how we dress here at Cranford, where everybody knows us?" And if they go from home, their reason is equally cogent: "What does it signify how we dress here, where nobody knows us?" The materials of their clothes are in general good and plain, and most of them are nearly as scrupulous as Miss Tyler of cleanly memory; but I will answer for it, the last gigot, the last tight and scanty petticoat in wear in England, was seen in Cranford—and seen without a smile.

I can testify to a magnificent family red-silk umbrella, under which a gentle little spinster, left alone of many brothers and sisters, used to patter to church on rainy days. Have you any red-silk umbrellas in London? We had a tradition of the first that had ever been seen in Cranford; and the little boys mobbed it, and called it "a stick in petticoats." It might have been the very red-silk one I have described, held by a strong father over a troop of little ones; the poor little lady — the survivor of all — could scarcely carry it.

Then there were rules and regulations for visiting and calls; and they were announced to any young people who might be staying in the town, with all the solemnity with which the old Manx laws were read once a year on the Tinwald Mount.

« Our friends have sent to inquire how you are after your journey to-night, my dear » (fifteen miles in a gentleman's carriage); « they will give you some rest to-morrow, but the next day, I have no doubt, they will call; so be at liberty after twelve — from twelve to three are our calling hours. »

Then, after they had called: —

« It is the third day: I daresay your mamma has told you, my dear, never to let more than three days elapse between receiving a call and returning it; and also, that you are never to stay longer than a quarter of an hour. »

« But am I to look at my watch? How am I to find out when a quarter of an hour has passed? »

« You must keep thinking about the time, my dear, and not allow yourself to forget it in conversation. »

As everybody had this rule in their minds, whether they received or paid a call, of course no absorbing subject was ever spoken about. We kept ourselves to short sentences of small-talk, and were punctual to our time.

I imagine that a few of the gentlefolks of Cranford were poor, and had some difficulty in making both ends meet; but they were like the Spartans, and concealed their smart under a smiling face. We none of us spoke of money, because that subject savored of commerce and trade, and though some might be poor, we were all aristocratic. The Cranfordians had that kindly *esprit de corps* which made them overlook all deficiencies in success when some among them tried to conceal their poverty. When Mrs. Forrester, for instance, gave a party in her baby-house of a dwelling, and the little maiden disturbed the ladies on the sofa by a request that she might get the tea-tray out from underneath, every one took this novel proceeding as the most natural thing in the world, and talked on about household forms and ceremonies as if we all believed that our hostess had a regular servants' hall, second table, with housekeeper and steward, instead of the one little charity-school maiden, whose short ruddy arms could never have been strong enough to carry the tray up-stairs if she had not been assisted in private by her mistress, who now sat in state, pretending not to know what cakes were sent up, though she knew, and we knew, and she knew that we knew, and we knew that she knew that we knew, she had been busy all the morning making tea-bread and sponge-cakes.

There were one or two consequences arising from this general but unacknowledged poverty and this very much acknowledged gentility, which were not amiss, and which might be introduced into many circles of society to their great improvement. For instance, the inhabitants of Cranford kept early hours, and clattered home in their pattens under the guidance of a lantern-bearer about nine o'clock at night; and the whole town was abed and asleep by half-past ten. Moreover, it was considered «vulgar» (a tremendous word in Cranford) to give anything expensive in the way of eatable or drinkable, at the evening entertainments. Wafer bread and butter and sponge-biscuits were all that the Honorable Mrs. Jamieson gave; and she was sister-in-law to the late Earl of Glenmire, although she did practice such «elegant economy.»

«Elegant economy!» How naturally one falls back into the phraseology of Cranford! There, economy was always «elegant,» and money-spending always «vulgar and ostentatious»; a sort of sour-grapeism which made us very peaceful and satisfied. I never shall forget the dismay felt when a certain Captain Brown came to live at Cranford, and openly spoke about his being poor — not in a whisper to an intimate friend, the doors and windows being previously closed, but in the public street! in a loud military voice! alleging his poverty as a reason for not taking a particular house. The ladies of Cranford were already rather moaning over the invasion of their territories by a man and a gentleman. He was a half-pay captain, and had obtained some situation on a neighboring railroad, which had been vehemently petitioned against by the little town; and if in addition to his masculine gender and his connection with the obnoxious railroad, he was so brazen as to talk of being poor — why then indeed he must be sent to Coventry. Death was as true and as common as poverty; yet people never spoke about that, loud out in the streets. It was a word not to be mentioned to ears polite. We had tacitly agreed to ignore that any with whom we associated on terms of visiting equality could ever be prevented by poverty from doing anything that they wished. If we walked to or from a party, it was because the night was *so* fine, or the air *so* refreshing; not because sedan-chairs were expensive. If we wore prints instead of summer silks, it was because we preferred a washing material; and so on, till we blinded ourselves to the vulgar fact that we were all of us people of very moderate means. Of course, then, we did not know what to make of a man who could speak of poverty as if it was not a disgrace. Yet somehow Captain Brown made himself respected in Cranford, and was called upon, in spite of all resolutions to the contrary. I was surprised to hear his opinions quoted as authority at a visit which I paid to Cranford about a year after he had settled in the town. My own friends had been among the bitterest opponents of any proposal to visit the captain and his daughters only twelve months before; and now he was even admitted in the tabooed hours before twelve. True, it was to discover the cause of a smoking chimney, before the fire was lighted; but still Captain Brown walked up-stairs, nothing daunted, spoke in a voice too large for the room, and joked quite in the way of a tame man about the house. He had been blind to all the small slights, and omissions of trivial ceremonies, with which he had been received. He had been friendly, though the Cranford ladies had been cool; he had answered small sarcastic compliments in good faith; and with his manly frankness had overpowered all the shrinking which met him as a man who was not ashamed to be poor. And at last his excellent masculine common-sense, and his facility in devising expedients to overcome domestic dilemmas, had gained him an extraordinary place as authority among the Cranford ladies. He himself went on in his course, as unaware of his popularity as he had been of the reverse. . . .

I wondered what the Cranford ladies did with Captain Brown at their parties. We had often rejoiced, in former days, that there was no gentleman to be attended to and to find conversation for, at the card parties. We had congratulated ourselves upon the snugness of the evenings, and in our love for gentility and distaste of mankind we had almost persuaded ourselves that to be a man was to be «vulgar»; so that when I found my friend and hostess Miss Jenkyns was going to have a party in my honor, and that Captain and the Miss Browns were invited, I wondered much what would be the course of the evening. Card tables, with green-baize tops, were set out by daylight, just as usual: it was the third week in November, so the evenings closed in about four. Candles and clean packs of cards were arranged on each table. The fire was made up; the neat maid-servant had received her last directions: and there we stood, dressed in our best, each with a candle-lighter in our hands, ready to dart at the candles as soon as the first knock came. Parties in Cranford were solemn festivities, making the ladies feel gravely elated as they sat together in their best dresses. As soon as three had arrived, we sat down to Preference, I being the unlucky fourth. The next four comers were put down immediately to another table; and presently the tea-trays, which I had seen set out in the store-room as I passed in the morning, were placed each on the middle of a card table. The china was delicate egg-shell; the old-fashioned silver glittered with polishing; but the eatables were of the slightest description.

While the trays were yet on the tables, Captain and the Miss Browns came in; and I could see that, somehow or other, the captain was a favorite with all the ladies present. Ruffled brows were smoothed, sharp voices lowered at his approach. Miss Brown looked ill, and depressed almost to gloom. Miss Jessie smiled as usual, and seemed nearly as popular as her father. He immediately and quietly assumed the man's place in the room; attended to every one's wants, lessened the pretty maid-servant's labor by waiting on empty cups and bread-and-butterless ladies; and yet did it all in so easy and dignified a manner, and so much as if it were a matter of course for the strong to attend to the weak, that he was a true man throughout. He played for threepenny points with as grave an interest as if they had been pounds; and yet in all his attention to strangers he had an eye on his suffering daughter—for suffering I was sure she was, though to many eyes she might only appear to be irritable. Miss Jessie could not play cards, but she talked to the sitters-out, who before her coming had been rather inclined to be cross. She sang, too, to an old cracked piano which I think had been a spinet in its youth. Miss Jessie sang 'Jock o' Hazeldean' a little out of tune; but we were none of us musical, though Miss Jenkyns beat time, out of time, by way of appearing to be so.

It was very good of Miss Jenkyns to do this; for I had seen that, a little before, she had been a good deal annoyed by Miss Jessie Brown's unguarded admission (àpropos of Shetland wool) that she had an uncle, her mother's brother, who was a shopkeeper in Edinburgh. Miss Jenkyns tried to drown this confession by a terrible cough — for the Honorable Mrs. Jamieson was sitting at the card table nearest Miss Jessie, and what would she say or think if she found out that she was in the same room with a shopkeeper's niece! But Miss Jessie Brown (who had no tact, as we all agreed the next morning) *would* repeat the information, and assure Miss Pole she could easily get her the identical Shetland wool required «through my uncle, who has the best assortment of Shetland goods of any one in Edinbro'.» It was to take the taste of this out of our mouths, and the sound of this out of our ears, that Miss Jenkyns proposed music: so I say again, it was very good of her to beat time to the song.

When the trays reappeared with biscuits and wine, punctually at a quarter to nine, there was conversation, comparing of cards, and talking over tricks; but by-and-by Captain Brown sported a bit of literature.

«Have you seen any numbers of 'The Pickwick Papers'?» said he. (They were then publishing in parts.) «Capital thing!»

Now, Miss Jenkyns was daughter of a deceased rector of Cranford, and on the strength of a number of manuscript sermons and a pretty good library of divinity considered herself literary, and looked upon any conversation about books as a challenge to her. So she answered and said, «Yes, she had seen them; indeed, she might say she had read them.»

«And what do you think of them?» exclaimed Captain Brown. «Aren't they famously good?»

So urged, Miss Jenkyns could not but speak.

«I must say, I don't think they are by any means equal to Dr. Johnson. Still, perhaps, the author is young. Let him persevere, and who knows what he may become if he will take the great Doctor for his model.»

This was evidently too much for Captain Brown to take placidly; and I saw the words on the tip of his tongue before Miss Jenkyns had finished her sentence.

«It is quite a different sort of thing, my dear madam,» he began.

«I am quite aware of that,» returned she; «and I make allowances, Captain Brown.»

«Just allow me to read you a scene out of this month's number,» pleaded he. «I had it only this morning, and I don't think the company can have read it yet.»

«As you please,» said she, settling herself with an air of resignation. He read the account of the «swarry» which Sam Weller gave at Bath. Some of us laughed heartily. I did not dare, because I was staying in the house. Miss Jenkyns sat in patient gravity. When it was ended, she turned to me, and said, with mild dignity:—

«Fetch me 'Rasselas,' my dear, out of the book-room.»

When I brought it to her, she turned to Captain Brown:—

«Now allow *me* to read you a scene, and then the present company can judge between your favorite Mr. Boz and Dr. Johnson.»

She read one of the conversations between Rasselas and Imlac, in a high-pitched, majestic voice; and when she had ended she said, «I imagine I am now justified in my preference of Dr. Johnson as a writer of fiction.» The captain screwed his lips up, and drummed on the table, but he did not speak. She thought she would give a finishing blow or two.

«I consider it vulgar, and below the dignity of literature, to publish in numbers.»

«How was The Rambler published, ma'am?» asked Captain Brown, in a low voice, which I think Miss Jenkyns could not have heard.

«Dr. Johnson's style is a model for young beginners. My father recommended it to me when I began to write letters—I have formed my own style upon it; I recommend it to your favorite.»

«I should be very sorry for him to exchange his style for any such pompous writing,» said Captain Brown.

Miss Jenkyns felt this as a personal affront, in a way of which the captain had not dreamed. Epistolary writing she and her friends considered as her *forte*. Many a copy of many a letter have I seen written and corrected on the slate, before she «seized the half-hour just previous to post-time to assure her friends» of this or that; and Dr. Johnson was, as she said, her model in these compositions. She drew herself up with dignity, and only replied to Captain Brown's last remark by saying, with marked emphasis on every syllable, «I prefer Dr. Johnson to Mr. Boz.»

It is said—I won't vouch for the fact—that Captain Brown was heard to say, *sotto voce*, «D—n Dr. Johnson!» If he did, he was penitent afterwards, as he showed by going to stand near Miss Jenkyns's arm-chair, and endeavoring to beguile her into conversation on some more pleasing subject. But she was inexorable.

VISITING

From ‹Cranford›

One morning, as Miss Matty and I sat at our work—it was before twelve o'clock, and Miss Matty had not changed the cap with yellow ribbons that had been Miss Jenkyns's best, and which Miss Matty was now wearing out in private, putting on the one made in imitation of Mrs. Jamieson's at all times when she expected to be seen—Martha came up, and asked if Miss Betty Barker might speak to her mistress. Miss Matty assented, and quickly disappeared to change the yellow ribbons while Miss Barker came up-stairs; but as she had forgotten her spectacles, and was rather flurried by the unusual time of the visit, I was not surprised to see her return with one cap on the top of the other. She was quite unconscious of it herself, and looked at us with bland satisfaction. Nor do I think Miss Barker perceived it; for putting aside the little circumstance that she was not so young as she had been, she was very much absorbed in her errand, which she delivered herself of with an oppressive modesty that found vent in endless apologies.

Miss Betty Barker was the daughter of the old clerk at Cranford who had officiated in Mr. Jenkyns's time. She and her sister had had pretty good situations as ladies'-maids, and had saved money enough to set up a milliner's shop, which had been patronized by the ladies in the neighborhood. Lady Arley, for instance, would occasionally give Miss Barkers the pattern of an old cap of hers, which they immediately copied and circulated among the *élite* of Cranford. I say the *élite*, for Miss Barkers had caught the trick of the place, and piqued themselves upon their "aristocratic connection." They would not sell their caps and ribbons to any one without a pedigree. Many a farmer's wife or daughter turned away huffed from Miss Barkers' select millinery, and went rather to the universal shop, where the profits of brown soap and moist sugar enabled the proprietor to go straight to (Paris, he said, until he found his customers too patriotic and John-Bullish to wear what the Mounseers wore) London, where, as he often told his customers, Queen Adelaide had appeared only the very week before in a cap exactly like the one he showed them, trimmed with yellow and blue ribbons, and had been complimented by King William on the becoming nature of her head-dress.

Miss Barkers, who confined themselves to truth and did not approve of miscellaneous customers, throve notwithstanding. They were self-denying, good people. Many a time have I seen the eldest of them (she that had been maid to Mrs. Jamieson) carrying out some delicate mess to a poor person. They only aped their betters in having «nothing to do» with the class immediately below theirs. And when Miss Barker died, their profits and income were found to be such that Miss Betty was justified in shutting up shop and retiring from business. She also (as I think I have before said) set up her cow,—a mark of respectability in Cranford almost as decided as setting up a gig is among some people. She dressed finer than any lady in Cranford, and we did not wonder at it; for it was understood that she was wearing out all the bonnets and caps and outrageous ribbons which had once formed her stock in trade. It was five or six years since she had given up shop, so in any other place than Cranford her dress might have been considered *passé*.

And now Miss Betty Barker had called to invite Miss Matty to tea at her house on the following Tuesday. She gave me also an impromptu invitation, as I happened to be a visitor—though I could see she had a little fear lest, since my father had gone to live in Drumble, he might have engaged in that «horrid cotton trade,» and so dragged his family down out of «aristocratic society.» She prefaced this invitation with so many apologies that she quite excited my curiosity. «Her presumption» was to be excused. What had she been doing? She seemed so overpowered by it, I could only think that she had been writing to Queen Adelaide to ask for a receipt for washing lace; but the act which she so characterized was only an invitation she had carried to her sister's former mistress, Mrs. Jamieson. «Her former occupation considered, could Miss Matty excuse the liberty?» Ah! thought I, she has found out that double cap, and is going to rectify Miss Matty's head-dress. No; it was simply to extend her invitation to Miss Matty and to me. Miss Matty bowed acceptance; and I wondered that in the graceful action she did not feel the unusual weight and extraordinary height of her head-dress. But I do not think she did, for she recovered her balance, and went on talking to Miss Betty in a kind, condescending manner, very different from the fidgety way she would have had if she had suspected how singular her appearance was.

"Mrs. Jamieson is coming, I think you said?" asked Miss Matty.

"Yes. Mrs. Jamieson most kindly and condescendingly said she would be happy to come. One little stipulation she made, that she should bring Carlo. I told her that if I had a weakness, it was for dogs."

"And Miss Pole?" questioned Miss Matty, who was thinking of her pool at Preference, in which Carlo would not be available as a partner.

"I am going to ask Miss Pole. Of course, I could not think of asking her until I had asked you, madam — the rector's daughter, madam. Believe me, I do not forget the situation my father held under yours."

"And Mrs. Forrester, of course?"

"And Mrs. Forrester. I thought, in fact, of going to her before I went to Miss Pole. Although her circumstances are changed, madam, she was born a Tyrrell, and we can never forget her alliance to the Bigges of Bigelow Hall."

Miss Matty cared much more for the little circumstance of her being a very good card-player. Miss Barker looked at me with sidelong dignity, as much as to say, although a retired milliner, she was no democrat, and understood the difference of ranks.

"May I beg you to come as near half-past six to my little dwelling as possible, Miss Matilda? Mrs. Jamieson dines at five, but has kindly promised not to delay her visit beyond that time — half-past six." And with a swimming curtsy Miss Betty Barker took her leave. . . .

The spring evenings were getting bright and long, when three or four ladies in calashes met at Miss Barker's door. Do you know what a calash is? It is a covering worn over caps, not unlike the heads fastened on old-fashioned gigs; but sometimes it is not quite so large. This kind of head-gear always made an awful impression on the children in Cranford; and now two or three left off their play in the quiet sunny little street, and gathered in wondering silence round Miss Pole, Miss Matty, and myself. We were silent too, so that we could hear loud suppressed whispers inside Miss Barker's house: — "Wait, Peggy! wait till I've run up-stairs and washed my hands. When I cough, open the door; I'll not be a minute."

And true enough, it was not a minute before we heard a noise, between a sneeze and a crow; on which the door flew open. Behind it stood a round-eyed maiden, all aghast at the honorable company of calashes, who marched in without a word. She recovered presence of mind enough to usher us into a small room, which had been a shop, but was now converted into a temporary dressing-room. There we unpinned and shook ourselves, and arranged our features before the glass into a sweet and gracious company face; and then, bowing backwards with «After you, ma'am,» we allowed Mrs. Forrester to take precedence up the narrow staircase that led to Miss Barker's drawing-room. There she sat, as stately and composed as though we had never heard that odd-sounding cough, from which her throat must have been even then sore and rough. Kind, gentle, shabbily dressed Mrs. Forrester was immediately conducted to the second place of honor — a seat arranged something like Prince Albert's near the Queen's — good, but not so good. The place of pre-eminence was of course reserved for the Honorable Mrs. Jamieson, who presently came panting up the stairs — Carlo rushing round her on her progress, as if he meant to trip her up.

And now Miss Betty Barker was a proud and happy woman! She stirred the fire, and shut the door, and sat as near to it as she could, quite on the edge of her chair. When Peggy came in, tottering under the weight of the tea-tray, I noticed that Miss Barker was sadly afraid lest Peggy should not keep her distance sufficiently. She and her mistress were on very familiar terms in their every-day intercourse, and Peggy wanted now to make several little confidences to her, which Miss Barker was on thorns to hear, but which she thought it her duty as a lady to repress. So she turned away from all Peggy's asides and signs; but she made one or two very malapropos answers to what was said; and at last, seized with a bright idea, she exclaimed, « Poor sweet Carlo! I'm forgetting him. Come down-stairs with me, poor little doggie, and it shall have its tea, it shall!»

In a few minutes she returned, bland and benignant as before; but I thought she had forgotten to give the « poor little doggie » anything to eat, judging by the avidity with which he swallowed down chance pieces of cake. The tea tray was abundantly laden — I was pleased to see it, I was so hungry; but I was afraid the ladies present might think it vulgarly heaped up. I know they would have done at their own houses; but somehow the heaps disappeared here. I saw Mrs. Jamieson eating seed-cake slowly and considerately, as she did everything; and

I was rather surprised, for I knew she had told us on the occasion of her last party that she never had it in her house, it reminded her so much of scented soap. She always gave us Savoy biscuits. However, Mrs. Jamieson, kindly indulgent to Miss Barker's want of knowledge of the customs of high life, and to spare her feelings, ate three large pieces of seed-cake, with a placid, ruminating expression of countenance, not unlike a cow's.

After tea there was some little demur and difficulty. We were six in number; four could play at Preference, and for the other two there was Cribbage. But all except myself (I was rather afraid of the Cranford ladies at cards, for it was the most earnest and serious business they ever engaged in) were anxious to be of the «pool.» Even Miss Barker, while declaring she did not know Spadille from Manille, was evidently hankering to take a hand. The dilemma was soon put an end to by a singular kind of noise. If a baron's daughter-in-law could ever be supposed to snore, I should have said Mrs. Jamieson did so then; for overcome by the heat of the room, and inclined to doze by nature, the temptation of that very comfortable arm-chair had been too much for her, and Mrs. Jamieson was nodding. Once or twice she opened her eyes with an effort, and calmly but unconsciously smiled upon us; but by-and-by even her benevolence was not equal to this exertion, and she was sound asleep.

«It is very gratifying to me,» whispered Miss Barker at the card table to her three opponents, whom notwithstanding her ignorance of the game she was «basting» most unmercifully—«very gratifying indeed, to see how completely Mrs. Jamieson feels at home in my poor little dwelling; she could not have paid me a greater compliment.»

Miss Barker provided me with some literature, in the shape of three or four handsomely bound fashion-books ten or twelve years old; observing, as she put a little table and a candle for my special benefit, that she knew young people liked to look at pictures. Carlo lay and snorted and started at his mistress's feet. He too was quite at home.

The card table was an animated scene to watch: four ladies' heads, with niddle-noddling caps, all nearly meeting over the middle of the table in their eagerness to whisper quick enough and loud enough; and every now and then came Miss Barker's «Hush, ladies! if you please, hush! Mrs. Jamieson is asleep.»

It was very difficult to steer clear between Mrs. Forrester's deafness and Mrs. Jamieson's sleepiness. But Miss Barker managed her arduous task well. She repeated the whisper to Mrs. Forrester, distorting her face considerably in order to show by the motions of her lips what was said; and then she smiled kindly all round at us, and murmured to herself, «Very gratifying indeed; I wish my poor sister had been alive to see this day.»

Presently the door was thrown wide open; Carlo started to his feet with a loud snapping bark, and Mrs. Jamieson awoke; or perhaps she had not been asleep — as she said almost directly, the room had been so light she had been glad to keep her eyes shut, but had been listening with great interest to all our amusing and agreeable conversation. Peggy came in once more, red with importance. Another tray! «O gentility!» thought I, «can you endure this last shock?» For Miss Barker had ordered (nay, I doubt not prepared, although she did say, «Why! Peggy, what have you brought us?» and looked pleasantly surprised at the unexpected pleasure) all sorts of good things for supper — scalloped oysters, potted lobsters, jelly, a dish called «little Cupids» (which was in great favor with the Cranford ladies, although too expensive to be given except on solemn and state occasions — macaroons sopped in brandy, I should have called it, if I had not known its more refined and classical name). In short, we were evidently to be feasted with all that was sweetest and best; and we thought it better to submit graciously, even at the cost of our gentility — which never ate suppers in general, but which, like most non-supper-eaters, was particularly hungry on all special occasions.

Miss Barker in her former sphere had, I daresay, been made acquainted with the beverage they call cherry brandy. We none of us had ever seen such a thing, and rather shrank back when she proffered it us — «just a little, leetle glass, ladies; after the oysters and lobsters, you know. Shell-fish are sometimes thought not very wholesome.» We all shook our heads like female mandarins; but at last Mrs. Jamieson suffered herself to be persuaded, and we followed her lead. It was not exactly unpalatable, though so hot and so strong that we thought ourselves bound to give evidence that we were not accustomed to such things by coughing terribly — almost as strangely as Miss Barker had done, before we were admitted by Peggy.

"It's very strong," said Miss Pole, as she put down her empty glass; "I do believe there's spirit in it."

"Only a little drop—just necessary to make it keep," said Miss Barker. "You know we put brandy paper over preserves to make them keep. I often feel tipsy myself from eating damson tart."

I question whether damson tart would have opened Mrs. Jamieson's heart as the cherry brandy did; but she told us of a coming event, respecting which she had been quite silent till that moment.

"My sister-in-law, Lady Glenmire, is coming to stay with me." There was a chorus of "Indeed!" and then a pause. Each one rapidly reviewed her wardrobe, as to its fitness to appear in the presence of a baron's widow; for of course a series of small festivals were always held in Cranford on the arrival of a visitor at any of our friends' houses. We felt very pleasantly excited on the present occasion.

Not long after this, the maids and the lanterns were announced. Mrs. Jamieson had the sedan-chair, which squeezed itself into Miss Barker's narrow lobby with some difficulty, and most literally "stopped the way." It required some skillful manœuvring on the part of the old chairmen (shoemakers by day, but when summoned to carry the sedan, dressed up in a strange old livery—long greatcoats with small capes, coeval with the sedan and similar to the dress of the class in Hogarth's pictures) to edge, and back, and try at it again, and finally to succeed in carrying their burden out of Miss Barker's front door. Then we heard their pit-a-pat along the quiet little street, as we put on our calashes and pinned up our gowns; Miss Barker hovering about us with offers of help, which if she had not remembered her former occupation, and wished us to forget it, would have been much more pressing.

THÉOPHILE GAUTIER

(1811–1872)

BY ROBERT SANDERSON

Théophile Gautier was born in Tarbes (Department of the Hautes-Pyrénées) in Southern France, August 31st, 1811. Like all French boys, he was sent to the lycée (academy), where he promised to be a brilliant scholar; but his father was really his tutor, and to him Gautier attributed his instruction. Young Théophile showed marked preference for the so-called authors of the Decadence — Claudianus, Martial, Petronius, and others; also for the old French writers, especially Villon and Rabelais, whom he says he knew by heart. This is significant, in view of the young man's strong tendencies, later on, towards the new romantic school. The artistic temperament was very strong in him; and while still carrying on his studies at college he entered the painter Rioult's studio. His introduction to Victor Hugo in 1830 may be considered the decisive point in Gautier's career: from that day he gave up painting and became a fanatic admirer of the romantic leader.

Théophile Gautier

A short time afterwards, the first representation of ‘Hernani’ took place (February 25th, 1830), an important date in the life of Gautier. It was on this occasion that he put on for the only time that famous red waistcoat, which, with his long black mane streaming down his back, so horrified the staid Parisian bourgeois. This red waistcoat turns out, after all, not to have been a waistcoat at all, but a doublet; nor was it red, but pink. No truer is the legend, according to Gautier, that on this memorable occasion, armed with his two formidable fists, he felled right and left the terrified bourgeois. He says that he was at that time rather delicate, and had not yet developed that prodigious strength which later on enabled him to strike a 520-pound blow on a Turk's-head. In appearance Gautier was a large corpulent man with a leonine countenance, swarthy complexion, long black hair falling over his shoulders, black beard, and brilliant black eyes; an Oriental in looks as well as in some of his tastes. He had a passion for cats. His house was overrun by them, and he seldom wrote without having one on his lap. The privations he underwent during the siege of Paris, doubly hard to a man of Gautier's Gargantuesque appetite, no doubt hastened his death. He died on October 23d, 1872, of hypertrophy of the heart.

Gautier is one of those writers of whom one may say a vast deal of good and a vast deal of harm. His admirers think that justice has not been done him, that his fame will go on rising and his name will live as one of the great writers of France; others think that his name may perhaps not entirely disappear, but that if he is remembered at all it will be solely as the author of 'Émaux et Camées' (Enamels and Cameos). He wrote in his youth a book that did him great harm in the eyes of the public; but he has written something else besides 'Mademoiselle de Maupin,' and both in prose and poetry we shall find a good deal to admire in him. One thing is certain: he is a marvelous stylist. In his earliest poems Gautier already possesses that admirable artistic skill that prompts him to choose his words as a painter his colors, or a jeweler his gems and stones, so as to produce the most brilliant effects: these first compositions also have a grace, a charm, that we shall find lacking later on, for as he proceeds with his work he pays more and more attention to form and finish.

'Albertus, or Soul and Sin,' the closing poem of Gautier's first collection, is a «semi-diabolic, semi-fashionable» legend. An old witch, Veronica, a second Meg Merrilies, transforms herself into a beautiful maiden and makes love to Albertus, a young artist — otherwise Gautier himself. He cares for nothing but his art, but falls a victim to the spell cast over him by the siren. At the stroke of midnight, Veronica, to the young man's horror, from a beautiful woman changes back to the old hag she was, and carries him off to a place where witches, sorcerers, hobgoblins, harpies, ghouls, and other frightful creatures are holding a monstrous saturnalia; at the end of which, Albertus is left for dead in a ditch of the Appian Way with broken back and twisted neck. What does it all mean? the reader may ask. That «the wages of sin is death» seems to be the moral contained in this poem, if indeed any moral is intended at all. Be that as it may, 'Albertus' is a literary gem in its way; a work in which the poet has given free scope to his brilliant imagination, and showered by the handful the gems and jewels in his literary casket. Gautier may be said to have possessed the poetry of Death — some would say its horrors. This sentiment of horror at the repulsive manner of man's total destruction finds most vivid expression in 'The Comedy of Death,' a fantastic poem divided into two parts, 'Death in Life' and

‘Life in Death.’ The dialogue between the bride and the earthworm is of a flesh-creeping nature.

It is however as the poet of ‘Émaux et Camées’ (Enamels and Cameos) that Théophile Gautier will be chiefly remembered. Every poem but one in this collection is written in short octosyllabic verse, and every one is what the title implies,—a precious stone, a chiseled gem. Gautier’s wonderful and admirable talent for grouping together certain words that produce on one’s eye and mind the effect of a beautiful picture, his intense love of art, of the outline, the plastic, appear throughout this work. You realize on reading ‘Émaux et Camées,’ more perhaps than in any other work by this writer, that the poet is fully conscious of his powers and knows just how to use them. Any poem may be selected at random, and will be found a work of art.

The same qualities that distinguish Gautier as a poet are to be found in his novels, narratives of travels, criticisms,—in short, in everything he wrote; intense love for the beautiful,—physically beautiful,—wonderful talent for describing it. Of his novels, properly speaking, there are four that stand out prominently, each very different in its subject,—a proof of Gautier’s great versatility,—all perfect in their execution. The first is ‘Mademoiselle de Maupin’; it is an immoral book, but it is a beautiful book, not only because written with a rare elegance of style, but also because it makes you love beauty. Briefly, ‘Mademoiselle de Maupin’ may be called a pæan to beauty, sung by its high priest Théophile Gautier.

The other remarkable novels by this writer are ‘Le Capitaine Fracasse’ (Captain Smash-All), ‘Le Roman de la Momie’ (The Romance of the Mummy), and ‘Spirite.’ ‘Captain Fracasse,’ although not published until 1863, had been announced long beforehand; and Gautier had worked at it, off and on, for twenty years. It belongs to that class of novel known as picaresque—romances of adventures and battles. ‘Captain Fracasse’ is certainly the most popular of Gautier’s works.

‘The Romance of the Mummy’ is a very remarkable book, in which science and fiction have been blended in the most artistic and clever manner; picturesque, like all of Gautier’s writings, but the work of a savant as well as of a novelist. Here more than in any other book by this author,—with the exception perhaps of ‘Arria Marcella,’—Gautier has revived in a most lifelike way an entire civilization, so long extinct. ‘The Romance of the Mummy’ abounds in beautiful descriptions. The description of the finding of the mummy, that of the royal tombs, of Thebes with its hundred gates, the triumphal entrance of Pharaoh into that city, the crossing of the Red Sea by the Israelites, are all marvelous pictures, that not only fill the reader with the same admiration he would evince at the sight of a painting by one of the great masters, but give him the illusion of witnessing in the body the scenes so admirably described.

'Spirite,' a fantastic story, is a source of surprise to readers familiar with Gautier's other works: they find it hard to conceive that so thorough a materialist as Gautier could ever have produced a work so spiritualistic in its nature. The clever handling of a mystic subject, the richness and coloring of the descriptions, together with a certain ideal and poetical vein that runs through the book, make of 'Spirite' one of Gautier's most remarkable works.

Théophile Gautier has also written a number of *nouvelles* or short novels, and tales, some of which are striking compositions. 'Arria Marcella' is one of these; a brilliant, masterly composition, in which Gautier gives us such a perfect illusion of the past. Under his magic pen we find ourselves walking the streets of Pompeii and living over the life of the Romans in the first century of our era; and 'Une Nuit de Cléopâtre' (A Night with Cleopatra) is a vivid resurrection of the brilliant Egyptian court.

Of his various journeys to Spain, Italy, and the Orient, Gautier has given us the most captivating relations. To many this is not the least interesting portion of Gautier's work. The same qualities that are so striking in his poems and novels — vividness of description, love of the picturesque, wonderful power of expression — are likewise apparent in his relations of travels.

As a literary and especially as an art critic, Gautier ranks high. Bringing to this branch of literature the same qualities that distinguish him in others, he created a descriptive and picturesque method of criticism peculiarly his own. Of his innumerable articles on art and literature, some have been collected under the names of 'Les Grotesques,' a series of essays on a number of poets of the end of the sixteenth and first half of the seventeenth centuries, ridiculed by Boileau, but in whom Gautier finds some wheat among the chaff. The 'History of Dramatic Art in France for the Last Twenty-five Years,' beginning with the year 1837, will be consulted with great profit by those who are curious to follow the dramatic movement in that country. Of his essays on art, one is as excellent as the other; all the great masters are treated with a loving and admiring hand.

Among the miscellaneous works of this prolific writer should be mentioned 'Ménagerie Intime' (Home Menagerie), in which the author makes us acquainted in a most charming and familiar way with his home life, and the various pets, cats, dogs, white rats, parrots, etc., that in turn shared his house with him; *la Nature chez elle* (Nature at home), that none but a close observer of nature could have written.

The last book written by Gautier before his death was ‹Tableaux de Siège› (Siege Pictures, 1871). The subjects are treated just in the way we might expect from such a writer, from a purely artistic point of view.

Gautier has written for the stage only short plays and ballets; but if all he ever wrote were published, his works would fill nearly three hundred volumes. In spite of the quantity and quality of his books, the French Academy did not open her doors to him; but no more did it to Molière, Beaumarchais, Balzac, and many others. Opinions still vary greatly as to Théophile Gautier's literary merits; but his brilliant descriptive powers, his eminent qualities as a stylist, together with the influence he exercised over contemporary letters as the introducer of the plastic in literature, would seem sufficient to rank him among the great writers of France.

Robert Sanderson

THE ENTRY OF PHARAOH INTO THEBES

From ‹The Romance of a Mummy›

At length their chariot reached the manœuvring-ground, an immense inclosure, carefully leveled, used for splendid military displays. Terraces, one above the other, which must have employed for years the thirty nations led away into slavery, formed a frame *en relief* for the gigantic parallelogram; sloping walls built of crude bricks lined these terraces; their tops were covered, several rows deep, by hundreds of thousands of Egyptians, whose white or brightly colored costumes blazed in the sun with that perpetually restless movement which characterizes a multitude, even when it appears motionless; behind this line of spectators the cars, chariots, and litters, with their drivers, grooms, and slaves, looked like the encampment of an emigrating nation, such was their immense number; for Thebes, the marvel of the ancient world, counted more inhabitants than did some kingdoms.

The fine, even sand of the vast arena, bordered with a million heads, gleamed like mica dust beneath the light, falling from a sky as blue as the enamel on the statuettes of Osiris. On the south side of the field the terraces were broken, making way for a road which stretched towards Upper Ethiopia, the whole length of the Libyan chain. In the corresponding corner, the opening in the massive brick walls prolonged the roads to the Rhamses-Maïamoun palace. . . .

A frightful uproar, rumbling, deep, and mighty as that of an approaching sea, arose in the distance and drowned the thousand murmurs of the crowd, like the roar of the lion which hushes the barking of the jackals. Soon the noise of instruments of music could be distinguished amidst this terrestrial thunder, produced by the chariot wheels and the rhythmic pace of the foot-soldiers. A sort of reddish cloud, like that raised by the desert blasts, filled the sky in that direction, yet the wind had gone down; there was not a breath of air, and the smallest branches of the palm-trees hung motionless, as if they had been carved on a granite capital; not a hair moved on the women's moist foreheads, and the fluted streamers of their head-dresses hung loosely down their backs. This powdery fog was caused by the marching army, and hung over it like a fallow cloud.

The tumult increases; the whirlwinds of dust opened, and the first files of musicians entered the immense arena, to the great satisfaction of the multitude, who in spite of its respect for his Majesty were beginning to tire of waiting beneath a sun which would have melted any other skulls than those of the Egyptians.

The advance guard of musicians halted for several instants; colleges of priests, deputations of the principal inhabitants of Thebes, crossed the manœuvring-ground to meet the Pharaoh, and arranged themselves in a row in postures of the most profound respect, in such manner as to give free passage to the procession.

The band, which alone was a small army, consisted of drums, tabors, trumpets, and sistras.

The first squad passed, blowing a deafening blast upon their short clarions of polished brass, which shone like gold. Each of these trumpeters carried a second horn under his arm, as if the instrument might grow weary sooner than the man. The costume of these men consisted of a short tunic, fastened by a sash with ends falling in front; a small band, in which were stuck two ostrich feathers hanging over on either side, bound their thick hair. These plumes, so worn, recalled to mind the antennæ of scarabæi, and gave the wearers an odd look of being insects.

The drummers, clothed in a simple gathered skirt, and naked to the waist, beat the onagra-skin heads of their rounded drums with sycamore-wood drumsticks, their instruments suspended by leathern shoulder-belts, and observed the time which a drum-major marked for them by repeatedly turning towards them and clapping his hands.

After the drummers came the sistra-players, who shook their instruments by a quick, abrupt motion, and made at measured intervals the metal links ring on the four bronze bars.

The tabor-players carried their oblong instruments crosswise, held up by a scarf passed around the neck, and struck the lightly stretched parchment with both hands.

Each company of musicians numbered at least two hundred men; but the hurricane of noise produced by trumpets, drums, tabors, and sistras, and which would have drawn blood from the ears inside a palace, was none too loud or too unbearable beneath the vast cupola of heaven, in the midst of this immense open space, amongst this buzzing crowd, at the head of this army which would baffle nomenclators, and which was now advancing with a roar as of great waters.

And was it too much to have eight hundred musicians preceding a Pharaoh who was the best loved of Ammon-Ra, represented by colossal statues of basalt and granite sixty cubits high, whose name was written in cartouches on imperishable monuments, and his history painted and sculptured and painted on the walls of the hypostyle chambers, on the sides of pylons, in interminable *bas-reliefs*, in frescoes without end? Was it indeed too much for a king who could raise a hundred conquered races by the hair of their heads, and from his high throne corrected the nations with his whip; for a living sun burning their dazzled eyes; for a god, almost eternal?

After the musicians came the barbarian captives, strangely formed, with brutish faces, black skins, woolly hair, resembling apes as much as men, and dressed in the costume of their country, a short skirt above the hips, held by a single brace, embroidered in different colors.

An ingenious and whimsical cruelty had suggested the way in which the prisoners were chained. Some were bound with their elbows drawn behind their backs; others with their hands lifted above their heads, in a still more painful position; one had his wrists fastened in wooden cangs (instruments of torture, still used in China); another was half strangled in a sort of pillory; or a chain of them were linked together by the same rope, each victim having a knot round his neck. It seemed as if those who had bound these unfortunates had found a pleasure in forcing them into unnatural positions; and they advanced before their conqueror with awkward and tottering gait, rolling their large eyes and contorted with pain.

Guards walked beside them, regulating their step by beating them with staves.

Tawny women, with long flowing hair, carrying their children in ragged strips of cloth bound about their foreheads, came behind them; bent, covered with shame, exhibiting their naked squalor and deformity: a wretched company, devoted to the most degrading uses.

Others, young and beautiful, with lighter skin, their arms encircled by broad ivory bracelets, their ears pulled down by large metal discs, were enveloped in long tunics with wide sleeves, an embroidered hem around the neck, and falling in small flat folds to their ankles, upon which anklets rattled. Poor girls, torn from country, family, perhaps lovers, smiling through their tears! For the power of beauty is boundless; strangeness gives rise to caprice; and perhaps the royal favor awaited one of these barbarian captives in the depths of the gynæceum.

They were accompanied by soldiers who kept away the crowd.

The standard-bearers came next, lifting high the gilded staves of their flags, representing mystic baris, sacred hawks, heads of Hathor crowned with ostrich plumes, winged ibexes, inscriptions embellished with the King's name, crocodiles, and other religious or warlike emblems. Long white streamers, spotted with black, were tied to these standards, and floated gracefully with every motion. At sight of the standards announcing the appearance of Pharaoh, the deputations of priests and notables raised towards him their supplicating hands, or let them hang, palm outwards, against their knees. Some even prostrated themselves, with elbows pressed to their sides, their faces in the dust, in attitudes of absolute submission and profound adoration. The spectators waved their large palm-leaves in every direction.

A herald, or reader, holding in one hand a roll covered with hieroglyphics, came forward quite alone between the standard-bearers and the incense-bearers who preceded the King's litter.

He proclaimed in a loud voice, resounding as a brass trumpet, the victories of the Pharaoh; he recounted the results of the different battles, the number of captives and war chariots taken from the enemy, the amount of plunder, the measures of gold dust, and the elephant's tusks, the ostrich feathers, the masses of fragrant gum, the giraffes, lions, panthers, and other rare animals; he mentioned the names of the barbarian chiefs killed by the javelins or the arrows of his Majesty, Aroëris, the all-powerful, the loved of the gods.

At each announcement the people sent up an immense cry, and from the top of the slopes strewed the conqueror's path with long green palm-branches they held in their hands.

At last the Pharaoh appeared!

Priests, turning towards him at regular intervals, stretched out their amschiras to him, first throwing incense on the coals blazing in the little bronze cup, holding them by a handle formed like a sceptre, with the head of some sacred animal at the other end; they walked backwards respectfully, while the fragrant blue smoke ascended to the nostrils of the triumpher, apparently as indifferent to these honors as a divinity of bronze or basalt.

Twelve oëris, or military chiefs, their heads covered by a light helmet surrounded by ostrich feathers, naked to the waist, their loins enveloped in a narrow skirt with stiff folds, their targes suspended from the front of their belts, supported a sort of huge shield, on which rested the Pharaoh's throne. It was a chair, with arms and legs in the form of a lion, high-backed, with large full cushion, adorned on the sides with a kind of trellis-work of pink and blue flowers; the arms, legs, moldings of the seat were gilded, and the parts which were not, flamed with bright colors.

On either side of the litter, four fan-bearers waved enormous semicircular fans, fixed to gilded staves; two priests held aloft a large richly decorated horn of plenty, from which fell bunches of enormous lotus blooms. The Pharaoh wore a mitre-like helmet, cut out to make room for the ear, and brought down over the back of the neck to protect it. On the blue ground of the helmet scintillated a quantity of dots like the eyes of birds, made of three circles, black, white, and red; a scarlet and yellow border ran along the edge, and the symbolic viper, twisting its golden coils at the back, stood erect above the royal forehead; two long curled feathers, purple in color, floated over his shoulders, and completed his majestically elegant head-dress.

A wide gorget, with seven rows of enamels, precious stones, and golden beads, fell over the Pharaoh's chest and gleamed brightly in the sunlight. His upper garment was a sort of loose shirt, with pink and black squares; the ends, lengthening into narrow slips, were wound several times about his bust and bound it closely; the sleeves, cut short near the shoulder, and bordered with intersecting lines of gold, red, and blue, exposed his round, strong arms, the left furnished with a large metal wristband, meant to lessen the vibration of the string when he discharged an arrow from his triangular bow; and the right, ornamented by a bracelet in the form of a serpent in several coils, held a long gold sceptre with a lotus bud at the end. The rest of his body was wrapped in drapery of the finest linen, minutely plaited, bound about the waist by a belt inlaid with small enamel and gold plates. Between the band and the belt his torso appeared, shining and polished like pink granite shaped by a cunning workman. Sandals with returned toes, like skates, shod his long narrow feet, placed together like those of the gods on the temple walls.

His smooth beardless face, with large clearly cut features, which it seemed beyond any human power to disturb, and which the blood of common life did not color, with its death-like pallor, sealed lips, enormous eyes enlarged with black lines, the lids no more lowered than those of the sacred hawk, inspired by its very immobility a feeling of respectful fear. One might have thought that these fixed eyes were searching for eternity and the Infinite; they never seemed to rest on surrounding objects. The satiety of pleasures, the surfeit of wishes satisfied as soon as expressed, the isolation of a demigod who has no equal among mortals, the disgust for perpetual adoration, and as it were the weariness of continual triumph, had forever frozen this face, implacably gentle and of granite serenity. Osiris judging the souls could not have had a more majestic and calm expression.

A large tame lion, lying by his side, stretched out its enormous paws like a sphinx on its pedestal, and blinked its yellow eyes.

A rope, attached to the litter, bound the war chariots of the vanquished chiefs to the Pharaoh. He dragged them behind him like animals in leash. These men, with fierce despairing faces, their elbows drawn together by a strap and forming an ungraceful angle, tottered awkwardly at every motion of the chariots, driven by Egyptians.

Next came the chariots of the young princes royal, drawn by thoroughbred horses, elegantly and nobly formed, with slender legs, sinewy houghs, their manes cut short like a brush, harnessed by twos, tossing their red-plumed heads, with metal-bossed headstalls and frontlets. A curved pole, upheld on their withers, covered with scarlet panels, two collars surmounted by balls of polished brass, bound together by a light yoke bent like a bow with upturned ends; a bellyband and breastband elaborately stitched and embroidered, and rich housings with red or blue stripes and fringed with tassels, completed this strong, graceful, and light harness.

The body of the chariot, painted red and white, ornamented with bronze plaques and half-spheres, something like the umbo of the shields, was flanked with two large quivers placed diagonally opposite each other, one filled with arrows and the other with javelins. On the front of each, a carved, gilded lion, with set paws, and muzzle wrinkled into a frightful grin, seemed ready to spring with a roar upon the enemy.

The young princes had their hair bound with a narrow band, in which the royal viper was twisted; their only garment was a tunic gaudily embroidered at the neck and sleeves, and held in at the waist by a belt of black leather, clasped with a metal plate engraved with hieroglyphics. In this belt was a long dagger, with triangular brass blade, the handle channeled crosswise, terminated by a hawk's head.

In the chariot, by the side of each prince, stood the charioteer, who drove it in battle, and the groom, whose business it was to ward off with the shield the blows aimed at the combatant, while the latter discharged the arrows or threw the javelins which he took from the quivers on either side of the car.

In the wake of the princes followed the chariots, the Egyptian cavalry, twenty thousand in number, each drawn by two horses and holding three men. They advanced ten in a line, the axletrees perilously near together, but never coming in contact with each other, so great was the address of the drivers.

Several lighter chariots, used for skirmishing and reconnoitring, marched at the head and carried one warrior only, who in order to leave his hands free for fighting wound the reins around his body: by bending to the right or the left, or backwards, he guided or stopped his horses; and it was really wonderful to see the noble animals, apparently left to themselves, but governed by imperceptible movements, keep up an undisturbedly regular pace. . . .

The stamping of the horses, held in with difficulty, the thundering of the bronze-covered wheels, the metallic clash of weapons, gave to this line something formidable and imposing enough to raise terror in the most intrepid bosoms. The helmets, plumes, and breastplates dotted with red, green, and yellow, the gilded bows and brass swords, glittered and blazed terribly in the light of the sun, open in the sky, above the Libyan chain, like a great Osirian eye; and it was felt that the onslaught of such an army must sweep away the nations like a whirlwind which drives a light straw before it.

Beneath these innumerable wheels the earth resounded and trembled, as if it had been moved by some convulsion of nature.

To the chariots succeeded the battalions of infantry, marching in order, their shields on the left arm; in the right hand the lance, curved club, bow, sling, or axe, according as they were armed; the heads of these soldiers were covered with helmets, adorned with two horsehair tails, their bodies girded with a cuirass belt of crocodile-skin. Their impassible look, the perfect regularity of their movements, their reddish copper complexions, deepened by a recent expedition to the burning regions of Upper Ethiopia, their clothing powdered with the desert sand, they awoke admiration by their discipline and courage. With soldiers like these, Egypt could conquer the world. After them came the allied troops, recognizable from the outlandish form of their head-pieces, which looked like truncated mitres, or were surmounted by crescents spitted on sharp points. Their wide-bladed swords and jagged axes must have produced wounds which could not be healed.

Slaves carried on their shoulders or on barrows the spoils enumerated by the herald, and wild-beast tamers dragged behind them leashed panthers, cheetahs, crouching down as if trying to hide themselves, ostriches fluttering their wings, giraffes which overtopped the crowd by the entire length of their necks, and even brown bears,—taken, they said, in the Mountains of the Moon.

The procession was still passing, long after the King had entered his palace.

FROM ‹THE MARSH›

It is a pond, whose sleepy water
Lies stagnant, covered with a mantle
Of lily pads and rushes. . . .
Under the creeping duck-weed
The wild ducks dip
Their sapphire necks glazed with gold;
At dawn the teal is seen bathing,
And when twilight reigns,
It settles between two rushes and sleeps.

FROM ‹THE DRAGON-FLY›

Upon the heather sprinkled
With morning dew;
Upon the wild-rose bush;
Upon the shady trees;
Upon the hedges
Growing along the path;

Upon the modest and dainty
Daisy,
That droops its dreamy brow;
Upon the rye, like a green billow
Unrolled
By the winged caprice of the wind,
The dragon-fly gently rocks.

THE DOVES

On the hill-side, yonder where are the graves,
A fine palm-tree, like a green plume,
Stands with head erect; in the evening the doves
Come to nestle under its cover.

But in the morning they leave the branches;
Like a spreading necklace, they may be seen
Scattering in the blue air, perfectly white,
And settling farther upon some roof.

My soul is the tree where every eve, as they,
White swarms of mad visions
Fall from heaven, with fluttering wings,
To fly away with the first rays.

THE POT OF FLOWERS

Sometimes a child finds a small seed,
And at once, delighted with its bright colors,
To plant it he takes a porcelain jar
Adorned with blue dragons and strange flowers.

He goes away. The root, snake-like, stretches,
Breaks through the earth, blooms, becomes a shrub;
Each day, farther down, it sinks its fibrous foot,
Until it bursts the sides of the vessel.

The child returns: surprised, he sees the rich plant
Over the vase's débris brandishing its green spikes;
He wants to pull it out, but the stem is stubborn.
The child persists, and tears his fingers with the pointed arrows.

Thus grew love in my simple heart;
I believed I sowed but a spring flower;
'Tis a large aloe, whose root breaks
The porcelain vase with the brilliant figures.

PRAYER

As a guardian angel, take me under your wing;
Deign to stoop and put out, smiling,
Your maternal hand to my little hand
To support my steps and keep me from falling!

For Jesus the sweet Master, with celestial love,
Suffered little children to come to him;
As an indulgent parent, he submitted to their caresses
And played with them without showing weariness.

O you who resemble those church pictures
Where one sees, on a gold background, august Charity
Preserving from hunger, preserving from cold,
A fair and smiling group sheltered in her folds;

Like the nursling of the Divine mother,
For pity's sake, lift me to your lap;
Protect me, poor young girl, alone, an orphan,
Whose only hope is in God, whose only hope is in you!

THE POET AND THE CROWD

One day the plain said to the idle mountain:—
Nothing ever grows upon thy wind-beaten brow!
To the poet, bending thoughtful over his lyre,
The crowd also said:—Dreamer, of what use art thou?

Full of wrath, the mountain answered the plain:—
It is I who make the harvests grow upon thy soil;
I temper the breath of the noon sun,
I stop in the skies, the clouds as they fly by.

With my fingers I knead the snow into avalanches,
In my crucible I dissolve the crystals of glaciers,
And I pour out, from the tip of my white breasts,
In long silver threads, the nourishing streams.

. . . .

The poet, in his turn, answered the crowd:—
Allow my pale brow to rest upon my hand.
Have I not from my side, from which runs out my soul,
Made a spring gush to slake men's thirst?

THE FIRST SMILE OF SPRING

While to their perverse work
Men run panting,
March that laughs, in spite of showers,
Quietly gets Spring ready.

For the little daisies,
Slyly, when all sleep,
He irons little collars
And chisels gold studs.

Through the orchard and the vineyard,
He goes, cunning hair-dresser,
With a swan-puff,
And powders snow-white the almond-tree.

Nature rests in her bed;
He goes down to the garden
And laces the rosebuds
In their green velvet corsets.

While composing solfeggios
That he sings in a low tone to the blackbirds,
He strews the meadows with snowdrops
And the woods with violets.

By the side of the cress in the brook
Where drinks the stag, with listening ear,
With his concealed hand he scatters
The silver bells of the lilies of the valley.

. . . .

Then, when his work is done
And his reign about to end,
On the threshold of April, turning his head,
He says, Spring, you may come!

THE VETERANS

From ‹The Old Guard›

The thing is worth considering;
Three ghosts of old veterans
In the uniform of the Old Guard,
With two shadows of hussars!

Since the supreme battle
One has grown thin, the other stout;
The coat once made to fit them
Is either too loose or too tight.

Don't laugh, comrade;
But rather bow low
To these Achilles of an Iliad
That Homer would not have invented.

Their faces with the swarthy skin
Speak of Egypt with the burning sun,
And the snows of Russia
Still powder their white hair.

If their joints are stiff, it is because on the battle-field
Flags were their only blankets;
And if their sleeves don't fit,
It is because a cannon-ball took off their arm.

JOHN GAY

(1685–1732)

"In the great society of the wits," said Thackeray, "John Gay deserves to be a favorite, and to have a good place." The wits loved him. Prior was his faithful ally; Pope wrote him frequent letters of affectionate good advice; Swift grew genial in his merry company; and when the jester lapsed into gloom, as jesters will, all his friends hurried to coddle and comfort him. His verse is not of the first order, but the list of "English classics" contains far poorer; it is entertaining enough to be a pleasure even to bright children of this generation, and each succeeding one reads it with an inherited fondness not by any means without help from its own merits. And the man who invented comic opera, one of the most enduring molds in which English humor has been cast, deserves the credit of all important literary pioneers.

John Gay

Kind, lazy, clever John Gay came of a good, impoverished Devonshire family, which seems to have done its best for the bright lad of twelve when it apprenticed him to a London silk mercer. The boy hated this employment, grew ill under its fret and confinement, went back to the country, studied, possibly wrote poor verses, and presently drifted back to London. The cleverest men of the time frequented the crowded taverns and coffee-houses, and the talk that he heard at Will's and Button's may have determined his profession. Thither came Pope and Addison, Swift and Steele, Congreve, St. John, Prior, Arbuthnot, Cibber, Hogarth, Walpole, and many a powerful patron who loved good company.

Perhaps through some kind acquaintance made in this informal circle, Gay obtained a private secretaryship, and began the flirtation with the Muse which became serious only after some years of coldness on that humorous lady's part. His first poem, 'Wine,' published when he was twenty-three, is not included in his collected works: perhaps because it is written in blank verse; perhaps because his maturer taste condemned it. Three years later, in 1711, when the success of the Spectator was yet new, and Pope had just completed his brilliant 'Art of Criticism,' and Swift was editing the Examiner and working on that defense of a French peace, 'The Conduct of the Allies,' which was to make him the talk of London,—Gay sent forth his second venture; a curious, unimportant pamphlet, 'The Present State of Wit.' Late in 1713 he is contributing to Dicky Steele's Guardian, and sending elegies to his 'Poetical Miscellanies'; and a little later, having become a favorite with the powerful Mr. Pope, he is made to bring up new reinforcements to the battle of that irascible gentleman with his ancient enemy Ambrose Phillips. This he does in 'The Shepherd's Week,' a sham pastoral, which is full of wit and easy versification, and shows very considerable talents as a parodist. This skit the luckless satirist dedicated to Bolingbroke, whose brilliant star was just passing into eclipse. Swift thought this harmless courtesy the real cause of the indifference of the Brunswick princes to the merits of the poet; and in an age when every spark of literary genius was so carefully nursed and utilized to sustain the weak dynasty, most likely he was right.

For this reason or another, indifferent they were; and in a time when court favor counted enormously, poor indolent luxury-loving Gay had to earn his loaf by hard work, or go without it. He produced a tragi-comi-pastoral farce called 'What D'ye Call It?' which was the lineal ancestor of 'Pinafore' and the 'Pirates of Penzance' in its method of treating farcical incidents in a grave manner. But the town did not see the fun of this expedient, and the play failed, though it contained, among other famous songs, ''Twas When the Seas Were Roaring.' In 1716 'Trivia, or the Art of Walking the Streets of London,' put some money into the poet's empty pocket, thanks to Pope's good offices. A year later a second comedy of his, 'Three Hours after Marriage,' met with well-deserved failure. And now, as always, when his spirits sank, his good friends showered kindnesses upon him. Mr. Secretary Pulteney carried him off to Aix. Lord Bathurst and Lord Burlington were his to command. Many fine gentlemen, and particularly many fine ladies, pressed him to make indefinite country visits. In 1720 his friends managed the publication of his poems in two quarto volumes, subscribing for ten, twenty, and even fifty copies apiece, some of them, and securing to the poet, it is said, £1,000. The younger Craggs, the bookseller, gave him some South-Sea stock which rose rapidly, and at one time the improvident little gentleman found himself in possession of £20,000. All his friends besought him to sell, but Alnaschar Gay had visions of a splendid ease and opulence. The bubble burst, and poor Alnaschar had not wherewithal to pay his broker.

The Duchess of Queensborough (Prior's «Kitty, beautiful and young») had already annexed the charmer, and now carried him off to Petersham. «I wish you had a little villakin in Mr. Pope's neighborhood,» scolds Swift to him; «but you are yet too volatile, and any lady with a coach and six horses might carry you to Japan;» and again:—«I know your arts of patching up a journey between stage-coaches and friend's coaches—for you are as arrant a cockney as any hosier in Cheapside. I have often had it in my head to put it into yours, that you ought to have some great work in scheme which may take up seven years to finish, besides two or three under ones that may add another thousand pounds to your stock; and then I shall be in less pain about you. I know you can find dinners, but you love twelvepenny coaches too well, without considering that the interest of a whole thousand pounds brings you but half a crown a day.» Gay went to Bath with the Queensberrys, and to Oxford. Swift complained to Pope:—«I suppose Mr. Gay will return from Bath with twenty pounds more flesh, and two hundred pounds less money. Providence never designed him to be above two-and-twenty, by his thoughtlessness and gullibility. He has as little foresight of age, sickness, poverty, or loss of admirers as a girl of fifteen.» And his dear Mrs. Howard, afterwards Lady Suffolk, took him affectionately to task:—«Your head is your best friend: it would clothe, lodge, and feed you; but you neglect it, and follow that false friend your heart, which is such a foolish, tender thing that it makes others despise your head, that have not half so good a one on their own shoulders. In short, John, you may be a snail, or a silkworm; but by my consent you shall never be a hare again.»

He lived under other great roofs, if not contentedly, at least gracefully and agreeably. If his dependent state irked him, his hosts did not perceive it. To Swift he wrote, indeed, «They wonder at each other for not providing for me, and *I* wonder at them all.» Yet, for the nine years from 1722 to 1731 he had a small official salary, on which a thriftier or more industrious mortal would have managed to live respectably even in that expensive age; and for at least a part of the time he had official lodgings at Whitehall.

In 1725 was published the first edition of his famous 'Fables,' which had been written for the moral behoof of Prince William, afterward Duke of Cumberland, of unblessed memory. The book did not make his fortune with the court, as he had hoped, and in 1728 he produced his best known work, 'The Beggar's Opera.' Nobody had much faith in this «Newgate Pastoral,» least of all Swift, who had first suggested it. But it took the town by storm, running for sixty-three consecutive nights. As the heroine, Polly Peachum, the lovely Lavinia Fenton captured a duchess's coronet. The songs were heard alike in West End drawing-rooms and East End slums. Swift praised it for its morality, and the Archbishop of Canterbury scored it for its condonation of vice. The breath of praise and blame filled equally its prosperous sails, blew it all over the kingdom wherever a theatre could be found, and finally wafted it to Minorca. So well did the opera pay him that Gay wrote a sequel called 'Polly,' which, being prohibited through some notion of Walpole's, sold enormously by subscription and earned Gay £1,200.

After this the hospitable Queensberrys seem to have adopted him. He produced a musical drama, 'Acis and Galatea,' written long before and set to Handel's music; a few more 'Fables'; a thin opera called 'Achilles'; and then his work was done. He died in London of a swift fever, in December 1732, before his kind Kitty and her husband could reach him, or his other great friend, the Countess of Suffolk. Arbuthnot watched over him; Pope was with him to the last; Swift indorsed on the letter that brought him the tidings, «On my dear friend Mr. Gay's death; received on December 15th, but not read till the 20th, by an impulse foreboding some misfortune.» So faithfully did the «giants,» as Thackeray calls them, cherish this gentle, friendly, affectionate, humorous comrade. He seems indeed to have been almost the only companion with whom Swift did not at some time fall out, and of his steadfastness the gloomy great man in his 'Verses on my Own Death' could write:—

«Poor Pope will grieve a month, and Gay
A week, and Arbuthnot a day.»

The 'Trivia' and the 'Shepherd's Week,' the 'Acis and Galatea' and even the 'Beggar's Opera,' gradually faded into the realm of «old, forgotten, far-off things»; while the 'Fables' passed through many editions, found their place in school reading-books, were committed to memory by three generations of admiring pupils, and included in the most orthodox libraries. Yet criticism now reverts to the earlier standard; approves the songs, and the minute observation, the nice phrasing, and the humorous swing of the pastorals and operas, and finds the fables dull, commonplace, and monotonous. Pope said in his affectionate epitaph that the poet had been laid in Westminster Abbey, not for ambition, but—

«That the worthy and the good shall say,
Striking their pensive bosoms, '*Here* lies Gay.'»

If to-day the worthy and the good do not know even where he lies, not the less is he to be gratefully remembered whom the best and greatest of his own time so much admired, and of whom Pope and Johnson and Thackeray and Dobson have written with the warmth of friendship.

THE HARE AND MANY FRIENDS

From the ‹Fables›

FRIENDSHIP, like love, is but a name,
Unless to one you stint the flame.
The child whom many fathers share
Hath seldom known a father's care.
'Tis thus in friendships: who depend
On many, rarely find a friend.

A Hare, who in a civil way
Complied with everything, like Gay,
Was known by all the bestial train
Who haunt the wood or graze the plain.
Her care was, never to offend,
And ev'ry creature was her friend.

As forth she went at early dawn
To taste the dew-besprinkled lawn,
Behind she hears the hunters' cries,
And from the deep-mouthed thunder flies.
She starts, she stops, she pants for breath;
She hears the near advance of death;
She doubles to mislead the hound,
And measures back her mazy round;
Till fainting in the public way,
Half dead with fear, she gasping lay.

What transport in her bosom grew,
When first the horse appeared in view!
«Let me,» says she, «your back ascend,
And owe my safety to a friend.
You know my feet betray my flight;
To friendship every burden's light.»

The Horse replied:—«Poor honest Puss,
It grieves my heart to see thee thus:
Be comforted, relief is near;
For all your friends are in the rear.»

She next the stately Bull implored;
And thus replied the mighty lord:—
«Since every beast alive can tell
That I sincerely wish you well,
I may, without offense, pretend
To take the freedom of a friend.

Love calls me hence; a favorite cow
Expects me near yon barley-mow:
And when a lady's in the case,
You know all other things give place.
To leave you thus might seem unkind;
But see, the Goat is just behind."

The Goat remarked her pulse was high,
Her languid head, her heavy eye;
"My back," says he, "may do you harm:
The Sheep's at hand, and wool is warm."

The Sheep was feeble, and complained
His sides a load of wool sustained:
Said he was slow, confessed his fears;
For hounds eat Sheep, as well as Hares!

She now the trotting Calf addressed,
To save from death a friend distressed.
"Shall I," says he, "of tender age,
In this important care engage?
Older and abler passed you by;
How strong are those! how weak am I!
Should I presume to bear you hence,
Those friends of mine may take offense.
Excuse me then. You know my heart:
But dearest friends, alas! must part.
How shall we all lament! Adieu!
For see, the hounds are just in view."

THE SICK MAN AND THE ANGEL

From the 'Fables'

Is there no hope? the Sick Man said.
The silent doctor shook his head,
And took his leave with signs of sorrow,
Despairing of his fee to-morrow.
When thus the Man with gasping breath:—
I feel the chilling wound of death;
Since I must bid the world adieu,
Let me my former life review.
I grant, my bargains well were made,
But all men overreach in trade;
'Tis self-defense in each profession;
Sure, self-defense is no transgression.

The little portion in my hands,
By good security on lands,
Is well increased. If unawares,
My justice to myself and heirs
Hath let my debtor rot in jail,
For want of good sufficient bail;
If I by writ, or bond, or deed,
Reduced a family to need,—
My will hath made the world amends;
My hope on charity depends.
When I am numbered with the dead,
And all my pious gifts are read,
By heaven and earth 'twill then be known,
My charities were amply shown.
   An Angel came. Ah, friend! he cried,
No more in flattering hope confide.
Can thy good deeds in former times
Outweigh the balance of thy crimes?
What widow or what orphan prays
To crown thy life with length of days?
A pious action's in thy power;
Embrace with joy the happy hour.
Now, while you draw the vital air,
Prove your intention is sincere:
This instant give a hundred pound;
Your neighbors want, and you abound.
   But why such haste? the Sick Man whines:
Who knows as yet what Heaven designs?
Perhaps I may recover still;
That sum and more are in my will.
   Fool, says the Vision, now 'tis plain,
Your life, your soul, your heaven was gain;
From every side, with all your might,
You scraped, and scraped beyond your right;
And after death would fain atone,
By giving what is not your own.
   Where there is life there's hope, he cried;
Then why such haste?—so groaned and died.

THE JUGGLER

From the ‹Fables›

A JUGGLER long through all the town
Had raised his fortune and renown;
You'd think (so far his art transcends)
The Devil at his fingers' ends.
Vice heard his fame; she read his bill;
Convinced of his inferior skill,
She sought his booth, and from the crowd
Defied the man of art aloud.
Is this, then, he so famed for sleight?
Can this slow bungler cheat your sight?
Dares he with me dispute the prize?
I leave it to impartial eyes.
Provoked, the Juggler cried, 'Tis done.
In science I submit to none.
Thus said, the cups and balls he played;
By turns, this here, that there, conveyed.
The cards, obedient to his words,
Are by a fillip turned to birds.
His little boxes change the grain;
Trick after trick deludes the train.
He shakes his bag, he shows all fair;
His fingers spreads,— and nothing there;
Then bids it rain with showers of gold,
And now his ivory eggs are told.
But when from thence the hen he draws,
Amazed spectators hum applause.
Vice now stept forth, and took the place
With all the forms of his grimace.
This magic looking-glass, she cries
(There, hand it round), will charm your eyes.
Each eager eye the sight desired,
And ev'ry man himself admired.
Next to a senator addressing:
See this bank-note; observe the blessing,
Breathe on the bill. Heigh, pass! 'Tis gone;
Upon his lips a padlock shone.
A second puff the magic broke,
The padlock vanished, and he spoke.
Twelve bottles ranged upon the board,
All full, with heady liquor stored,

By clean conveyance disappear,
And now two bloody swords are there.
 A purse she to a thief exposed,
At once his ready fingers closed:
He opes his fist, the treasure's fled:
He sees a halter in its stead.
 She bids ambition hold a wand;
He grasps a hatchet in his hand.
 A box of charity she shows:
Blow here; and a churchwarden blows.
'Tis vanished with conveyance neat,
And on the table smokes a treat.
 She shakes the dice, the board she knocks,
And from her pockets fills her box.

. . . .

 A counter in a miser's hand
Grew twenty guineas at command.
She bids his heir the sum retain,
And 'tis a counter now again.
 A guinea with her touch you see
Take ev'ry shape but Charity;
And not one thing you saw, or drew,
But changed from what was first in view.
 The Juggler now, in grief of heart,
With this submission owned her art.
Can I such matchless sleight withstand?
How practice hath improved your hand!
But now and then I cheat the throng;
You every day, and all day long.

SWEET WILLIAM'S FAREWELL TO BLACK-EYED SUSAN

A Ballad

All in the Downs the fleet was moored,
 The streamers waving in the wind,
When black-eyed Susan came aboard:
 Oh, where shall I my true love find!
Tell me, ye jovial sailors, tell me true,
If my sweet William sails among the crew.

William, who high upon the yard
 Rocked with the billow to and fro,

Soon as her well-known voice he heard,
He sighed and cast his eyes below;
The cord slides swiftly through his glowing hands,
And quick as lightning on the deck he stands.

So the sweet lark, high poised in air,
Shuts close his pinions to his breast
(If, chance, his mate's shrill call he hear),
And drops at once into her nest.
The noblest captain in the British fleet
Might envy William's lip those kisses sweet.

O Susan, Susan, lovely dear,
My vows shall ever true remain;
Let me kiss off that falling tear;
We only part to meet again.
Change, as ye list, ye winds; my heart shall be
The faithful compass that still points to thee.

Believe not what the landmen say,
Who tempt with doubts thy constant mind:
They'll tell thee, sailors when away
In every port a mistress find.
Yes, yes, believe them when they tell thee so,
For thou art present wheresoe'er I go.

If to far India's coast we sail,
Thy eyes are seen in diamonds bright;
Thy breath is Afric's spicy gale,
Thy skin is ivory so white.
Thus every beauteous object that I view,
Wakes in my soul some charm of lovely Sue.

Though battle call me from thy arms,
Let not my pretty Susan mourn;
Though cannons roar, yet safe from harms,
William shall to his dear return.
Love turns aside the balls that round me fly,
Lest precious tears should drop from Susan's eye.

The boatswain gave the dreadful word;
The sails their swelling bosom spread;
No longer must she stay aboard:
They kissed, she sighed, he hung his head:
Her lessening boat unwilling rows to land:
Adieu! she cries; and waved her lily hand.

FROM ‹WHAT D'YE CALL IT?›

A BALLAD

'TWAS when the seas were roaring
With hollow blasts of wind,
A damsel lay deploring,
All on a rock reclined.
Wide o'er the foaming billows
She cast a wistful look;
Her head was crowned with willows,
That tremble o'er the brook.

«Twelve months are gone and over,
And nine long tedious days;
Why didst thou, venturous lover,
Why didst thou trust the seas?
Cease, cease, thou cruel ocean,
And let my lover rest:
Ah! what's thy troubled motion
To that within my breast?

«The merchant robbed of pleasure
Sees tempests in despair;
But what's the loss of treasure,
To losing of my dear?
Should you some coast be laid on,
Where gold and diamonds grow,
You'll find a richer maiden,
But none that loves you so.

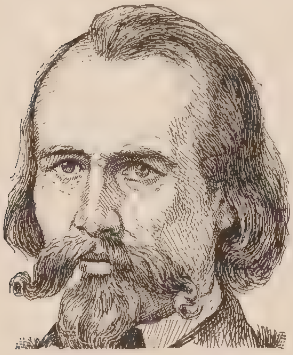
«How can they say that nature
Has nothing made in vain;
Why then, beneath the water,
Should hideous rocks remain?
No eyes the rocks discover
That lurk beneath the deep,
To wreck the wandering lover,
And leave the maid to weep.»

All melancholy lying,
Thus wailed she for her dear!
Repaid each blast with sighing,
Each billow with a tear.
When o'er the white wave stooping,
His floating corpse she spied,—
Then, like a lily drooping,
She bowed her head and died.

EMANUEL VON GEIBEL

(1815–1884)

The chief note in Geibel's nature was reverence. A spirit of reverent piety, using the phrase in its widest as well as in its strictly religious sense, characterizes all his poetical utterances. He intended to devote himself to theology, but the humanistic tendencies of the age, combined with his own peculiar endowments, led him to abandon the Church for pure literature. The reverent attitude of mind, however, remained, and has left its impress even upon his most impassioned love lyrics. It appears too in his first literary venture, a volume of 'Classical Studies' undertaken in collaboration with his friend Ernst Curtius, in which is displayed his loving reverence for the great monuments of Greek antiquity. He felt himself an exile from Greece, and like Goethe's Iphigenia, his soul was seeking ever for the land of Hellas. And through the influence of Bettina von Arnim this longing was satisfied; he secured the post of tutor in the household of the Russian ambassador to Athens.


Emanuel von Geibel

Geibel was only twenty-three years of age when this good fortune fell to his lot. He was born at Lübeck on October 18th, 1815. His poetic gifts, early manifested, secured him a welcome in the literary circles of Berlin. During the two years that he spent in Greece he was enabled to travel over a large part of the Grecian Archipelago in the inspiring company of Curtius; and it was upon their return to Germany in 1840 that the 'Classical Studies' appeared, and were dedicated to the Queen of Greece. Then Geibel eagerly took up the study of French and Spanish, with the result that many valuable volumes were published in collaboration with Paul Heyse, Count von Schack, and Leuthold, which introduced to the German public a vast treasury of song from the literatures of France, Spain, and Portugal. The first collection of Geibel's own poems in 1843 secured for the poet a modest pension from the King of Prussia.

Geibel also made several essays at dramatic composition. He wrote for Mendelssohn the text of a 'Lorelei,' but the composer died before the music was completed. A comedy called 'Master Andrew' was successful in a number of cities; and of his more ambitious tragedies, 'Brunhild' and 'Sophonisba,' the latter won the famous Schiller prize in 1869.

In 1852 Geibel received an appointment as royal reader to Maximilian II., and was made professor at the University of Munich. It was also from the King of Bavaria that he procured his patent of nobility. In the same year that he took up his residence in Munich he married; but the death of his wife terminated his happy family relations three years later, and the death of the King severed his connection with the Bavarian court. Moreover, his sympathy with the revolutionary poets, such as his intimate friend Freiligrath, his own enthusiasm for the popular movement, and the faith which he placed in the King of Prussia, led to bitter attacks upon him in the Bavarian press, and eventually to his resignation from the faculty of the university. He returned to his native city of Lübeck. The Prussian King trebled his annual income, and the poet was raised above pecuniary cares. The last years of his life were saddened, without being embittered, by feeble health. He died on April 6th, 1884.

There was sometimes a touch of effeminate sentimentality in Geibel's work, but he did not lack force and virility, as his famous 'Twelve Sonnets' and his political poems, entitled 'Zeitgedichte,' show. He could speak strong words for right and justice, and in all his poems there is a musical beauty of language and a perfection of form that render his songs contributions of permanent value to the lyric treasury of German literature.

SEE'ST THOU THE SEA?

SEE'ST thou the sea? The sun gleams on its wave
With splendor bright;
But where the pearl lies buried in its cave
Is deepest night.
The sea am I. My soul, in billows bold,
Rolls fierce and strong;
And over all, like to the sunlight's gold,
There streams my song.
It throbs with love and pain as though possessed
Of magic art,
And yet in silence bleeds, within my breast,
My gloomy heart.

Translation of Frances Hellman. Copyright 1892.

AS IT WILL HAPPEN

"He loves thee not! He trifles but with thee!"
They said to her, and then she bowed her head,
And pearly tears, like roses' dew, wept she.
Oh, that she ever trusted what they said!
For when he came and found his bride in doubt,
Then, from sheer spite, he would not show his sorrow;
He played and laughed and drank, day in, day out,—
To weep from night until the morrow!

'Tis true, an angel whispered in her heart,
"He's faithful still; oh lay thy hand in his!"
And he too felt, 'midst grief and bitter smart,
"She loves thee! After all, thy love she is;
Let but a gentle word pass on each side,
The spell that parts you now will then be broken!"
They came—each looked on each—oh, evil pride!—
That single word remained unspoken!

They parted then. As in a church one oft
Extinguished sees the altar lamps' red fires,
Their light grows dim, then once more flares aloft
In radiance bright,—and thereupon expires,—
So died their love; at first lamented o'er,
Then yearned for ardently, and then—forgotten,
Until the thought that they had loved before
Of mere delusion seemed begotten!

But sometimes when the moon shone out at night,
Each started from his couch! Ah, was it not
Bedewed with tears? And tears, too, dimmed their sight,
Because these two had dreamed—I know not what!
And then the dear old times woke in their heart,
Their foolish doubts, their parting, that had driven
Their souls so far, so very far apart,—
Oh God! let both now be forgiven!

Translation of Frances Hellman. Copyright 1892.

GONDOLIERA

Oh, come to me when through the night
The starry legions ride!
Then o'er the sea, in the moonshine bright,
Our gondola will glide.
The air is soft as a lover's jest,
And gently gleams the light;
The zither sounds, and thy soul is blest
To join in this delight.
Oh, come to me when through the night
The starry legions ride!
Then o'er the sea, in the moonshine bright,
Our gondola will glide.

This is the hour for lovers true,
Darling, like thee and me;
Serenely smile the heavens blue
And calmly sleeps the sea.
And as it sleeps, a glance will say
What speech in vain has tried;
The lips then do not shrink away,
Nor is a kiss denied.
Oh, come to me when through the night
The starry legions ride!
Then o'er the sea, in the moonshine bright,
Our gondola will glide.

Translation of Frances Hellman. Copyright 1892.

THE WOODLAND

The wood grows denser at each stride;
No path more, no trail!
Only murm'ring waters glide
Through tangled ferns and woodland flowers pale.
Ah, and under the great oaks teeming
How soft the moss, the grass, how high!
And the heavenly depth of cloudless sky,
How blue through the leaves it seems to me!
Here I'll sit, resting and dreaming,
Dreaming of thee.

Translation of Charles Harvey Genung.

ONWARD

Cease thy dreaming! Cease thy quailing!
Wander on untiringly.
Though thy strength may all seem failing,
Onward! must thy watchword be.

Durst not tarry, though life's roses
Round about thy footsteps throng,
Though the ocean's depth discloses
Sirens with their witching song.

Onward! onward! ever calling
On thy Muse, in life's stern fray,
Till thy fevered brow feels, falling
From above, a golden ray.

Till the verdant wreath victorious
Crown with soothing shade thy brow;
Till the spirit's flames rise glorious
Over thee, with sacred glow.

Onward then, through hostile fire,
Onward through death's agony!
Who to heaven would aspire
Must a valiant warrior be.

Translation of Frances Hellman. Copyright 1892.

AT LAST THE DAYLIGHT FADETH

At last the daylight fadeth,
With all its noise and glare;
Refreshing peace pervadeth
The darkness everywhere.

On the fields deep silence hovers;
The woods now wake alone;
What daylight ne'er discovers,
Their songs to the night make known.

And what when the sun is shining
I ne'er can tell to thee,
To whisper it now I am pining,—
Oh, come and hearken to me!

Translation of Frances Hellman. Copyright 1892.

AULUS GELLIUS

(Second Century A. D.)

Perhaps Gellius's ‹Attic Nights› may claim especial mention here, as one of the earliest extant forerunners of this ‹Library.› In the original preface (given first among the citations), Gellius explains very clearly the origin and scope of his work. It is not, however, a mere scrap-book. There is original matter in many chapters. In particular, an ethical or philosophic excerpt has often been framed in a little scene,—doubtless imaginary,—and cast in the form of a dialogue. We get, even, pleasant glimpses of autobiography from time to time. The author is not, however, a deep or forceful character, on the whole. His heart is mostly set on trifles.

Yet Gellius has been an assiduous student, both in Greece and Italy; and his book gives us an agreeable, probably an adequate, view of the fields which are included in the general culture of his time. Despite its title, the work is chiefly Roman. In history, biography, antiquities, grammar, literary criticism, his materials and authors are prevailingly Latin. He is perhaps most widely known and quoted on early Roman life and usages. Thus, one of his chapters gives a mass of curious information as to the choice of the Vestal Virgins. We are also largely indebted to him for citations from lost authors. We have already quoted under Ennius the sketch, in eighteen hexameters, of a scholar-soldier, believed to be a genial self-portraiture. These lines are the finest specimen we have of the ‹Annales.› Similarly, under Cato, we have quoted the chief fragment of the great Censor's Roman history. For both these treasures we must thank Gellius. Indeed, throughout the wide fields of Roman antiquities, history of literature, grammar, etc., we have to depend chiefly upon various late Latin scrap-books and compilations, most of which are not even made up at first hand from creative classical authors. To Gellius, also, the imposing array of writers so constantly named by him was evidently known chiefly through compendiums and handbooks. It is suspicious, for instance, that he hardly quotes a poet within a century of his own time. Repetitions, contradictions, etc., are numerous.

Despite its twenty «books» and nearly four hundred (short) chapters, the work is not only light and readable for the most part, but quite modest in total bulk: five hundred and fifty pages in the small page and generous type of Hertz's Teubner text. There is an English translation by Rev. W. Beloe, first printed in 1795, from which we quote below. Professor Nettleship's (in his 'Essays in Latin Literature') has no literary quality, but gives a careful analysis of Gellius's subjects and probable sources. There is a revival of interest in this author in recent years. We decidedly recommend Hertz's attractive volume to any Latin student who wishes to browse beyond the narrow classical limits.

FROM 'ATTIC NIGHTS'

ORIGIN AND PLAN OF THE BOOK

More pleasing works than the present may certainly be found: my object in writing this was to provide my children, as well as myself, with that kind of amusement in which they might properly relax and indulge themselves at the intervals from more important business. I have preserved the same accidental arrangement which I had before used in making the collection. Whatever book came into my hand, whether it was Greek or Latin, or whatever I heard that was either worthy of being recorded or agreeable to my fancy, I wrote down without distinction and without order. These things I treasured up to aid my memory, as it were by a store-house of learning; so that when I wanted to refer to any particular circumstance or word which I had at the moment forgotten, and the books from which they were taken happened not to be at hand, I could easily find and apply it. Thus the same irregularity will appear in these commentaries as existed in the original annotations, which were concisely written down without any method or arrangement in the course of what I at different times had heard or read. As these observations at first constituted my business and my amusement through many long winter nights which I spent in Attica, I have given them the name of 'Attic Nights.' . . . It is an old proverb, "A jay has no concern with music, nor a hog with perfumes:" but that the ill-humor and invidiousness of certain ill-taught people may be still more exasperated, I shall borrow a few verses from a chorus of Aristophanes; and what he, a man of most exquisite humor, proposed as a law to the spectators of his play, I also recommend to the readers of this volume, that the vulgar and unhallowed herd, who are averse to the sports of the Muses, may not touch nor even approach it. The verses are these:—

Silent be they, and far from hence remove,
By scenes like ours not likely to improve,
Who never paid the honored Muse her rights,
Who senseless live in wild, impure delights;
I bid them once, I bid them twice begone,
I bid them thrice, in still a louder tone:
Far hence depart, whilst ye with dance and song
Our solemn feast, our tuneful nights prolong.

The Vestal Virgins

The writers on the subject of taking a Vestal Virgin, of whom Labeo Antistius is the most elaborate, have asserted that no one could be taken who was less than six or more than ten years old. Neither could she be taken unless both her father and mother were alive, if she had any defect of voice or hearing, or indeed any personal blemish, or if she herself or father had been made free; or if under the protection of her grandfather, her father being alive; if one or both of her parents were in actual servitude, or employed in mean occupations. She whose sister was in this character might plead exemption, as might she whose father was flamen, augur, one of the fifteen who had care of the sacred books, or one of the seventeen who regulated the sacred feasts, or a priest of Mars. Exemption was also granted to her who was betrothed to a pontiff, and to the daughter of the sacred trumpeter. Capito Ateius has also observed that the daughter of a man was ineligible who had no establishment in Italy, and that his daughter might be excused who had three children. But as soon as a Vestal Virgin is taken, conducted to the vestibule of Vesta, and delivered to the pontiffs, she is from that moment removed from her father's authority, without any form of emancipation or loss of rank, and has also the right of making her will. No more ancient records remain concerning the form and ceremony of taking a virgin, except that the first virgin was taken by King Numa. But we find a Papian law which provides that at the will of the supreme pontiff twenty virgins should be chosen from the people; that these should draw lots in the public assembly; and that the supreme pontiff might take her whose lot it was, to become the servant of Vesta. But this drawing of lots by the Papian law does not now seem necessary; for if any person of ingenuous birth goes to the pontiff and offers his daughter for this ministry, if she may be accepted without any violation of what the ceremonies of religion enjoin, the Senate dispenses with the Papian law. Moreover, a virgin is said to be taken, because she is taken by the hand of the high priest from that parent under whose authority she is, and led away as a captive in war. In the first book of Fabius Pictor, we have the form of words which the supreme pontiff is to repeat when he takes a virgin. It is this:—

"I take thee, beloved, as a priestess of Vesta, to perform religious service, to discharge those duties with respect to the whole body of the Roman people which the law most wisely requires of a priestess of Vesta."

It is also said in those commentaries of Labeo which he wrote on the Twelve Tables:—

"No Vestal Virgin can be heiress to any intestate person of either sex. Such effects are said to belong to the public. It is inquired by what right this is done?" When taken she is called *amata*, or beloved, by the high priest; because Amata is said to have been the name of her who was first taken.

The Secrets of the Senate

It was formerly usual for the senators of Rome to enter the Senate-house accompanied by their sons who had taken the prætexta. When something of superior importance was discussed in the Senate, and the further consideration adjourned to the day following, it was resolved that no one should divulge the subject of their debates till it should be formally decreed. The mother of the young Papirius, who had accompanied his father to the Senate-house, inquired of her son what the senators had been doing. The youth replied that he had been enjoined silence, and was not at liberty to say. The woman became more anxious to know; the secretness of the thing, and the silence of the youth, did but inflame her curiosity. She therefore urged him with more vehement earnestness. The young man, on the importunity of his mother, determined on a humorous and pleasant fallacy: he said it was discussed in the Senate, which would be most beneficial to the State — for one man to have two wives, or for one woman to have two husbands. As soon as she heard this she was much agitated, and leaving her house in great trepidation, went to tell the other matrons what she had learned. The next day a troop of matrons went to the Senate-house, and with tears and entreaties implored that one woman might be suffered to have two husbands, rather than one man to have two wives. The senators on entering the house were astonished, and wondered what this intemperate proceeding of the women, and their petition, could mean. The young Papirius, advancing to the midst of the Senate, explained the pressing importunity of his mother, his answer, and the matter as it was. The Senate, delighted with the honor and ingenuity of the youth, made a decree that from that time no youth should be suffered to enter the Senate with his father, this Papirius alone excepted.

Plutarch and His Slave

Plutarch once ordered a slave, who was an impudent and worthless fellow, but who had paid some attention to books and philosophical disputations, to be stripped (I know not for what fault) and whipped. As soon as his punishment began, he averred that he did not deserve to be beaten; that he had been guilty of no offense or crime. As they went on whipping him, he called out louder, not with any cry of suffering or complaint, but gravely reproaching his master. Such behavior, he said, was unworthy of Plutarch; that anger disgraced a philosopher; that he had often disputed on the mischiefs of anger; that he had written a very excellent book about not giving place to anger; but that whatever he had said in that book was now contradicted by the furious and ungovernable anger with which he had now ordered him to be severely beaten. Plutarch then replied with deliberate calmness:—«But why, rascal, do I now seem to you to be in anger? Is it from my countenance, my voice, my color, or my words, that you conceive me to be angry? I cannot think that my eyes betray any ferocity, nor is my countenance disturbed or my voice boisterous; neither do I foam at the mouth, nor are my cheeks red; nor do I say anything indecent or to be repented of; nor do I tremble or seem greatly agitated. These, though you may not know it, are the usual signs of anger.» Then, turning to the person who was whipping him: «Whilst this man and I,» said he, «are disputing, do you go on with your employment.»

Discussion on One of Solon's Laws

In those very ancient laws of Solon which were inscribed at Athens on wooden tables, and which, from veneration to him, the Athenians, to render eternal, had sanctioned with punishments and religious oaths, Aristotle relates there was one to this effect: If in any tumultuous dissension a sedition should ensue, and the people divide themselves into two parties, and from this irritation of their minds both sides should take arms and fight; then he who in this unfortunate period of civil discord should join himself to neither party, but should individually withdraw himself from the common calamity of the city, should be deprived of his house, his family and fortunes, and be driven into exile from his country. When I had read this law of Solon, who was eminent for his wisdom, I was at first impressed with great astonishment, wondering for what reason he should think those men deserving of punishment who withdrew themselves from sedition and a civil war. Then a person who had profoundly and carefully examined the use and purport of this law, affirmed that it was calculated not to increase but terminate sedition; and indeed it really is so, for if all the more respectable, who were at first unable to check sedition, and could not overawe the divided and infatuated people, join themselves to one part or other, it will happen that when they are divided on both sides, and each party begins to be ruled and moderated by them, as men of superior influence, harmony will by their means be sooner restored and confirmed; for whilst they regulate and temper their own parties respectively, they would rather see their opponents conciliated than destroyed. Favorinus the philosopher was of opinion that the same thing ought to be done in the disputes of brothers and of friends: that they who are benevolently inclined to both sides, but have little influence in restoring harmony, from being considered as doubtful friends, should decidedly take one part or other; by which act they will obtain more effectual power in restoring harmony to both. At present, says he, the friends of both think they do well by leaving and deserting both, thus giving them up to malignant or sordid lawyers, who inflame their resentments and disputes from animosity or from avarice.

The Nature of Sight

I have remarked various opinions among philosophers concerning the causes of sight and the nature of vision. The Stoics affirm the causes of sight to be an emission of radii from the eyes against those things which are capable of being seen, with an expansion at the same time of the air. But Epicurus thinks that there proceed from all bodies certain images of the bodies themselves, and that these impress themselves upon the eyes, and that thence arises the sense of sight. Plato is of opinion that a species of fire and light issues from the eyes, and that this, being united and continued either with the light of the sun or the light of some other fire, by its own, added to the external force, enables us to see whatever it meets and illuminates.

But on these things it is not worth while to trifle further; and I recur to an opinion of the Neoptolemus of Ennius, whom I have before mentioned: he thinks that we should taste of philosophy, but not plunge in it over head and ears.

Earliest Libraries

Pisistratus the tyrant is said to have been the first who supplied books of the liberal sciences at Athens for public use. Afterwards the Athenians themselves with great care and pains increased their number; but all this multitude of books, Xerxes, when he obtained possession of Athens and burned the whole of the city except the citadel, seized and carried away to Persia. But King Seleucus, who was called Nicanor, many years afterwards, was careful that all of them should be again carried back to Athens.

A prodigious number of books were in succeeding times collected by the Ptolemies in Egypt, to the amount of near seven hundred thousand volumes. But in the first Alexandrine war the whole library, during the plunder of the city, was destroyed by fire; not by any concerted design, but accidentally by the auxiliary soldiers.

Realistic Acting

There was an actor in Greece of great celebrity, superior to the rest in the grace and harmony of his voice and action. His name, it is said, was Polus, and he acted in the tragedies of the more eminent poets, with great knowledge and accuracy. This Polus lost by death his only and beloved son. When he had sufficiently indulged his natural grief, he returned to his employment. Being at this time to act the 'Electra' of Sophocles at Athens, it was his part to carry an urn as containing the bones of Orestes. The argument of the fable is so imagined that Electra, who is presumed to carry the relics of her brother, laments and commiserates his end, who is believed to have died a violent death. Polus, therefore, clad in the mourning habit of Electra, took from the tomb the bones and urn of his son, and as if embracing Orestes, filled the place, not with the image and imitation, but with the sighs and lamentations of unfeigned sorrow. Therefore, when a fable seemed to be represented, real grief was displayed.

THE ATHLETE'S END

MILO of Crotona, a celebrated wrestler, who as is recorded was crowned in the fiftieth Olympiad, met with a lamentable and extraordinary death. When, now an old man, he had desisted from his athletic art and was journeying alone in the woody parts of Italy, he saw an oak very near the roadside, gaping in the middle of the trunk, with its branches extended: willing, I suppose, to try what strength he had left, he put his fingers into the fissure of the tree, and attempted to pluck aside and separate the oak, and did actually tear and divide it in the middle; but when the oak was thus split in two, and he relaxed his hold as having accomplished his intention, upon a cessation of the force it returned to its natural position, and left the man, when it united, with his hands confined, to be torn by wild beasts.

Translation of Rev. W. Beloe.

GESTA ROMANORUM

WHAT are the ‘Gesta Romanorum’? The most curious and interesting of all collections of popular tales. Negatively, one thing they are not: that is, they are not *Deeds of the Romans*, the acts of the heirs of the Cæsars. All such allusions are the purest fantasy. The great «citee of Rome,» and some oddly dubbed emperor thereof, indeed the entire background, are in truth as unhistorical and imaginary as the tale itself.

Such stories are very old. So far back did they spring that it would be idle to conjecture their origin. In the centuries long before Caxton, the centuries before manuscript-writing filled up the leisure hours of the monks, the ‘Gesta,’ both in the Orient and in the Occident, were brought forth. Plain, direct, and unvarnished, they are the form in which the men of ideas of those rude times approached and entertained, by accounts of human joy and woe, their brother men of action. Every race of historic importance, from the eastern Turanians to the western Celts, has produced such legends. Sometimes they delight the lover of folk-lore; sometimes they belong to the Dryasdust antiquarian. But our ‘Gesta,’ with their directness and naïveté, with their occasional beauty of diction and fine touches of sympathy and imagination,—even with their Northern lack of grace,—are properly a part of literature. In these ‘Deeds’ is found the plot or ground-plan of such master works as ‘King Lear’ and the ‘Merchant of Venice,’ and the first cast of material refined by Chaucer, Gower, Lydgate, Schiller, and other writers.

Among the people in mediæval times such tales evidently passed from mouth to mouth. They were the common food of fancy and delight to our forefathers, as they gathered round the fire in stormy weather. Their recital enlivened the women's unnumbered hours of spinning, weaving, and embroidery. As the short days of the year came on, there must have been calls for ‘The Knights of Baldak and Lombardy,’ ‘The Three Caskets,’ or ‘The White and Black Daughters,’ as nowadays we go to our book-shelves for the stories that the race still loves, and ungraciously enjoy the silent telling.

Such folk-stories as those in the ‘Gesta’ are in the main made of, must have passed from district to district and even from nation to nation, by many channels,—chief among them the constant wanderings of monks and minstrels,—becoming the common heritage of many peoples, and passing from secular to sacerdotal use. The mediæval Church, with the acuteness that characterized it, seized on the pretty tales, and adding to them the moralizing which a crude system of ethics enjoined, carried its spoils to the pulpit. Even the fables of pagan Æsop were thus employed.

In the twelfth century the ecclesiastical forces were appropriating to their use whatever secular rights and possessions came within their grasp. A common ardor permitted and sustained this aggrandizement, and the devotion that founded and swelled the mendicant orders of Francis and Dominic, and led the populace to carry with prayers and psalm-singing the stones of which great cathedrals were built, readily gave their hearth-tales to illustrate texts and inculcate doctrines. A habit of interpreting moral and religious precepts by allegory led to the far-fetched, sometimes droll, and always naïve «moralities» which commonly follow each one of the ‹Gesta.› The more popular the tale, the more easily it held the attention; and the priests with telling directness brought home the moral to the simple-minded. The innocent joys and sad offenses of humanity interpreted the Church's whole system of theology, and the stories, committed to writing by the priests, were thus preserved.

The secular tales must have been used in the pulpit for some time before their systematic collection was undertaken. The zeal for compiling probably reached its height in the age of Pierre Bercheure, who died in 1362. To Bercheure, prior of the Benedictine Convent of St. Eloi at Paris, the collection of ‹Gesta Romanorum› has been ascribed. A German scholar, however, Herr Österley, who published in 1872 the result of an investigation of one hundred and sixty-five manuscripts, asserts that the ‹Gesta› were originally compiled towards the end of the thirteenth century in England, from which country they were taken to the Continent, there undergoing various alterations. «The popularity of the original ‹Gesta,›» says Sir F. Madden, «not only on the Continent but among the English clergy, appears to have induced some person, apparently in the reign of Richard the Second, to undertake a similar compilation in this country.» The ‹Anglo-Latin Gesta› is the immediate original of the early English translation from which the following stories are taken, with slight verbal changes.

The word *Gesta*, in mediæval Latin, means notable or historic act or exploit. The Church, drawing all power, consequence, and grace from Rome, naturally looked back to the Roman empire for historic examples. In this fact we find the reason of the name. The tales betray an entire ignorance of history. In one, for example, a statue is raised to Julius Cæsar twenty-two years after the founding of Rome; while in another, Socrates, Alexander, and the Emperor Claudius are living together in Rome.

It is a pleasant picture which such legends bring before our eyes. The old parish church of England, which with its yards is a common meeting-place for the people's fairs and wakes, and even for their beer-brewing; the simple rustics forming the congregation; the tonsured head of the priest rising above the pulpit,—a monk from the neighboring abbey, who earns his brown bread and ale and venison by endeavors to move the moral sentiments which lie at the root of the Anglo-Saxon character and beneath the apparent stolidity of each yokel. Many of the tales are unfit for reproduction in our more mincing times. The faithlessness of wives—with no reference whatever to the faithlessness of husbands—is a favorite theme with these ancient cenobites.

It is possible, Herr Österley thinks, that the conjecture of Francis Douce may be true, and the 'Gesta' may after all have been compiled in Germany. But the bulk of the evidence goes to prove an English origin. The earliest editions were published at Utrecht and at Cologne. The English translation, from the text of the Latin of the reign of Richard II., was first printed by Wynkyn de Worde between 1510 and 1515. In 1577 Richard Robinson published a revised edition of Wynkyn de Worde's. The work became again popular, and between 1648 and 1703 at least eight issues were sold. An English translation by Charles Swan from the Latin text was first published in 1824, and reissued under the editorship of Thomas Wright in 1872 as a part of Bohn's Library.

THEODOSIUS THE EMPEROURE*

THEODOSIUS reigned a wise emperour in the cite of Rome, and mighty he was of power; the which emperoure had three doughters. So it liked to this emperour to knowe which of his doughters loved him best; and then he said to the eldest doughter, «How much lovest thou me?» «Forsoth,» quoth she, «more than I do myself.» «Therefore,» quoth he, «thou shalt be heighly advanced;» and married her to a riche and mighty kyng. Then he came to the second, and said to her, «Doughter, how muche lovest thou me?» «As muche forsoth,» she said, «as I do myself.» So the emperoure married her to a duke. And then he said to the third doughter, «How much lovest thou me?» «Forsoth,» quoth she, «as muche as ye be worthy, and no more.» Then said the emperoure, «Doughter, since thou lovest me no more, thou shalt not be married so richely as thy sisters be.» And then he married her to an earl.

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*The story of King Lear and his three daughters.

After this it happened that the emperour held battle against the Kyng of Egipt, and the kyng drove the emperour oute of the empire, in so muche that the emperour had no place to abide inne. So he wrote lettres ensealed with his ryng to his first doughter that said that she loved him more than her self, for to pray her of succoring in that great need, bycause he was put out of his empire. And when the doughter had red these lettres she told it to the kyng her husband. Then quoth the kyng, « It is good that we succor him in his need. I shall, » quoth he, « gather an host and help him in all that I can or may; and that will not be done withoute great costage. » « Yea, » quoth she, « it were sufficiant if that we would graunt him V knyghtes to be fellowship with him while he is oute of his empire. » And so it was done indeed; and the doughter wrote again to the fader that other help might he not have, but V knyghtes of the kynges to be in his fellowship, at the coste of the kyng her husband.

And when the emperour heard this he was hevy in his hert and said, « Alas! alas! all my trust was in her; for she said she loved me more than herself, and therefore I advanced her so high. »

Then he wrote to the second, that said she loved him as much as her self. And when she had herd his lettres she shewed his erand to her husband, and gave him in counsel that he should find him mete and drink and clothing, honestly as for the state of such a lord, during tyme of his nede; and when this was graunted she wrote lettres agein to hir fadir.

The Emperour was hevy with this answere, and said, « Since my two doughters have thus grieved me, in sooth I shall prove the third. »

And so he wrote to the third that she loved him as muche as he was worthy; and prayed her of succor in his nede, and told her the answere of her two sisters. So the third doughter, when she considered the mischief of her fader, she told her husbond in this fourme: « My worshipful lord, do succor me now in this great nede; my fadir is put out of his empire and his heritage. » Then spake he, « What were thy will I did thereto? » « That ye gather a great host, » quoth she, « and help him to fight against his enemys. » « I shall fulfill thy will, » said the earl; and gathered a greate hoste and wente with the emperour at his owne costage to the battle, and had the victorye, and set the emperour again in his heritage.

And then said the emperour, "Blessed be the hour I gat my yonest doughter! I loved her lesse than any of the others, and now in my nede she hath succored me, and the others have failed me, and therefore after my deth she shall have mine empire." And so it was done in dede; for after the deth of the emperour the youngest doughter reigned in his sted, and ended peacefully.

MORALITE

Dere Frendis, this emperour may be called each worldly man, the which hath three doughters. The first doughter, that saith, "I love my fadir more than my self," is the worlde, whom a man loveth so well that he expendeth all his life about it; but what tyme he shall be in nede of deth, scarcely if the world will for all his love give him five knyghtes, *scil.* v. boards for a coffin to lay his body inne in the sepulcre. The second doughter, that loveth her fader as muche as her selfe, is thy wife or thy children or thy kin, the whiche will haply find thee in thy nede to the tyme that thou be put in the erthe. And the third doughter, that loveth thee as muche as thou art worthy, is our Lord God, whom we love too little. But if we come to him in tyme of oure nede with a clene hert and mynd, withoute doute we shall have help of him against the Kyng of Egipt, *scil.* the Devil; and he shall set us in our owne heritage, *scil.* the kyngdome of heven. *Ad quod nos* [etc.].

ANCELMUS THE EMPEROUR*

Ancelmus reigned emperour in the cite of Rome, and he wedded to wife the Kinges doughter of Jerusalem, the which was a faire woman and long dwelte in his company. . . . Happing in a certaine evening as he walked after his supper in a fair green, and thought of all the worlde, and especially that he had no heir, and how that the Kinge of Naples strongly therefore noyed [harmed] him each year; and so whenne it was night he went to bed and took a sleep and dreamed this: He saw the firmament in its most clearnesse, and more clear than it was wont to be, and the moon was more pale; and on a parte of the moon was a faire-colored bird, and beside her stood two beasts, the which nourished the bird with their heat and breath. After this came divers beasts and birds flying, and they sang so sweetly that the emperour was with the song awaked.

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* The story of the three caskets in 'The Merchant of Venice.'

Thenne on the morrow the emperoure had great marvel of his sweven [dream], and called to him divinours [soothsayers] and lords of all the empire, and saide to them, « Deere frendes, telleth me what is the interpretation of my sweven, and I shall reward you; and but if ye do, ye shall be dead.» And then they saide, « Lord, show to us this dream, and we shall tell thee the interpretation of it.» And then the emperour told them as is saide before, from beginning to ending. And then they were glad, and with a great gladnesse spake to him and saide, « Sir, this was a good sweven. For the firmament that thou sawe so clear is the empire, the which henceforth shall be in prosperity; the pale moon is the empresse. . . . The little bird is the faire son whom the empresse shall bryng forth, when time cometh; the two beasts been riche men and wise men that shall be obedient to thy childe; the other beasts been other folke, that never made homage and nowe shall be subject to thy sone; the birds that sang so sweetly is the empire of Rome, that shall joy of thy child's birth: and sir, this is the interpretacion of your dream.»

When the empresse heard this she was glad enough; and soon she bare a faire sone, and thereof was made much joy. And when the King of Naples heard that, he thought to himselfe: « I have longe time holden war against the emperour, and it may not be but that it will be told to his son, when that he cometh to his full age, howe that I have fought all my life against his fader. Yea,» thought he, « he is now a child, and it is good that I procure for peace, that I may have rest of him when he is in his best and I in my worste.»

So he wrote lettres to the emperour for peace to be had; and the emperour seeing that he did that more for cause of dread than of love, he sent him worde again, and saide that he would make him surety of peace, with condition that he would be in his servitude and yield him homage all his life, each year. Thenne the kyng called his counsel and asked of them what was best to do; and the lordes of his kyngdom saide that it was goode to follow the emperour in his will:—« In the first ye aske of him surety of peace; to that we say thus: Thou hast a doughter and he hath a son; let matrimony be made between them, and so there shall be good sikernesse [sureness]; also it is good to make him homage and yield him rents." Thenne the kyng sent word to the emperour and saide that he would fulfill his will in all points, and give his doughter to his son in wife, if that it were pleasing to him.

This answer liked well the emperour. So lettres were made of this covenaunt; and he made a shippe to be adeyned [prepared], to lead his doughter with a certain of knightes and ladies to the emperour to be married with his sone. And whenne they were in the shippe and hadde far passed from the lande, there rose up a great horrible tempest, and drowned all that were in the ship, except the maid. Thenne the maide set all her hope strongly in God; and at the last the tempest ceased; but then followed strongly a great whale to devoure this maid. And whenne she saw that, she muche dreaded; and when the night come, the maid, dreading that the whale would have swallowed the ship, smote fire at a stone, and had great plenty of fire; and as long as the fire lasted the whale durst come not near, but about cock's crow the mayde, for great vexacion that she had with the tempest, fell asleep, and in her sleep the fire went out; and when it was out the whale came nigh and swallowed both the ship and the mayde. And when the mayde felt that she was in the womb of a whale, she smote and made great fire, and grievously wounded the whale with a little knife, in so much that the whale drew to the land and died; for that is the kind to draw to the land when he shall die.

And in this time there was an earl named Pirius, and he walked in his disport by the sea, and afore him he sawe the whale come toward the land. He gathered great help and strength of men; and with diverse instruments they smote the whale in every part of him. And when the damsell heard the great strokes she cried with an high voice and saide, "Gentle sirs, have pity on me, for I am the doughter of a king, and a mayde have been since I was born." Whenne the earl heard this he marveled greatly, and opened the whale and took oute the damsell. Thenne the maide tolde by order how that she was a kyng's doughter, and how she lost her goods in the sea, and how she should be married to the son of the emperour. And when the earl heard these words he was glad, and helde the maide with him a great while, till tyme that she was well comforted; and then he sent her solemnly to the emperour. And whenne he saw her coming, and heard that she had tribulacions in the sea, he had great compassion for her in his heart, and saide to her, « Goode damsell, thou hast suffered muche anger for the love of my son; nevertheless, if that thou be worthy to have him I shall soon prove.»

The emperour had made III. vessells, and the first was of clean [pure] golde and full of precious stones outwarde, and within full of dead bones; and it had a superscription in these words: *They that choose me shall find in me that they deserve.* The second vessell was all of clean silver, and full of worms: and outwarde it had this superscription: *They that choose me shall find in me that nature and kind desireth.* And the third vessell was of lead and within was full of precious stones, and without was set this scripture [inscription]: *They that choose me shall find in me that God hath disposed.* These III. vessells tooke the emperour and showed the maide, saying, « Lo! deer damsell, here are three worthy vessellys, and if thou choose [the] one of these wherein is profit and right to be chosen, then thou shalt have my son to husband; and if thou choose that that is not profitable to thee nor to no other, forsooth, thenne thou shalt not have him.»

Whenne the doughter heard this and saw the three vessells, she lifted up her eyes to God and saide:—« Thou, Lord, that knowest all things, graunt me thy grace now in the need of this time, *scil.* that I may choose at this time, wherethrough [through which] I may joy the son of the emperour and have him to husband.» Thenne she beheld the first vessell that was so subtly [cunningly] made, and read the superscription; and thenne she thought, « What have I deserved for to have so precious a vessell? and though it be never so gay without, I know not how foul it is within;» so she tolde the emperour that she would by no way choose that. Thenne she looked to the second, that was of silver, and read the superscription; and thenne she said, « My nature and kind asketh but delectation of the flesh, forsooth, sir,» quoth she; « and I refuse this.» Thenne she looked to the third, that was of lead, and read the superscription, and then she saide, « In sooth, God disposed never evil; forsooth, that which God hath disposed will I take and choose.»

And when the emperour sawe that he saide, « Goode damesell, open now that vessell and see what thou hast found.» And when it was opened it was full of gold and precious stones.

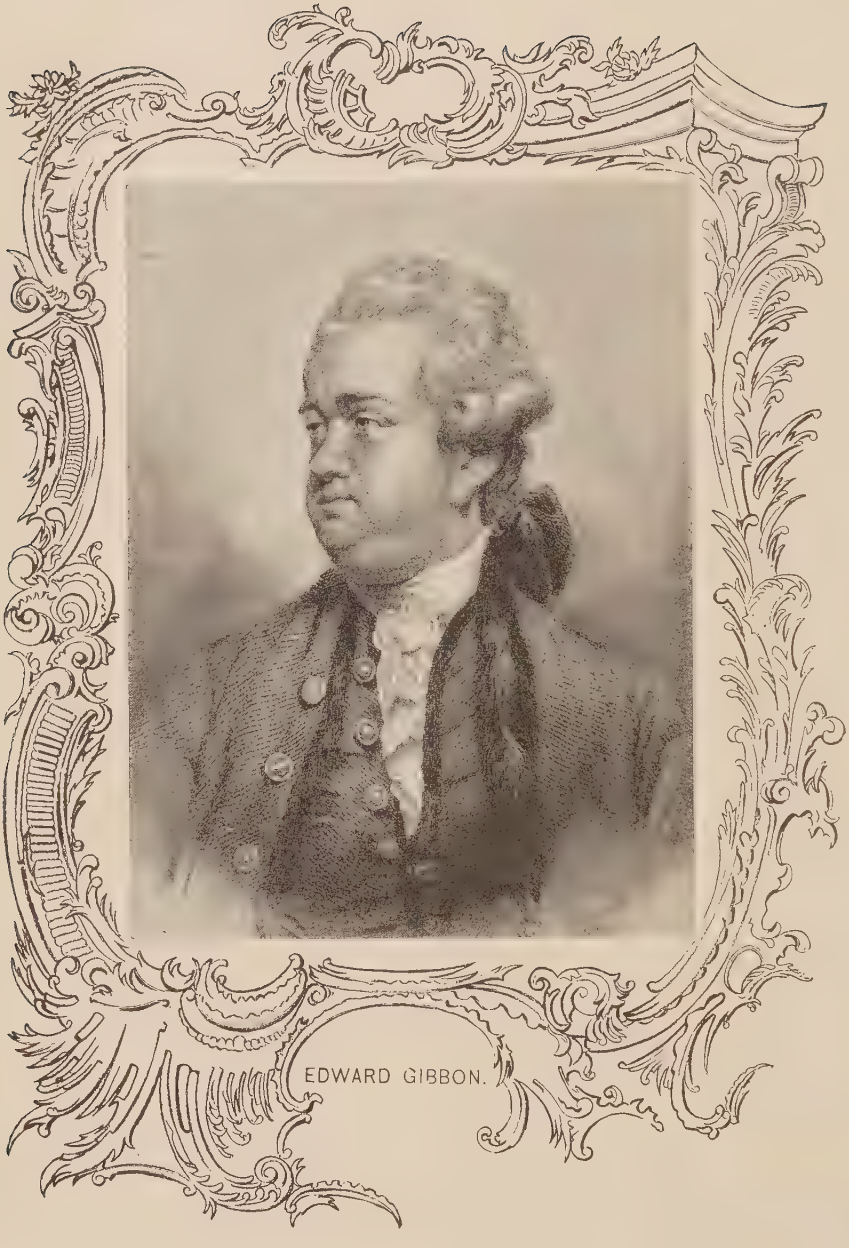
And thenne the emperour saide to her again, «Damesell, thou hast wisely chosen and won my son to thine husband.» So the day was set of their bridal, and great joy was made; and the son reigned after the decease of the fadir, the which made faire ende. *Ad quod nos perducat!* Amen.

MORALITE

DEERE frendis, this emperour is the Father of Heaven, the whiche made man ere he tooke flesh. The empress that conceived was the blessed Virgin, that conceived by the annunciation of the angel. The firmament was set in his most clearnesse, *scil.* the world was lighted in all its parts by the concepcion of the empress Our Lady. . . . The little bird that passed from the side of the moon is our Lord Jesus Christ, that was born at midnight and lapped [wrapped] in clothes and set in the crib. The two beasts are the oxen and the asses. The beasts that come from far parts are the herds [shepherds] to whom the angels saide, *Ecce annuncio vobis gaudium magnum,* — «Lo! I shew you a great joy.» The birds that sang so sweetly are angels of heaven, that sang *Gloria in excelsis Deo.* The king that held such war is mankind, that was contrary to God while that it was in power of the Devil; but when our Lord Jesus Christ was born, then mankind inclined to God, and sent for peace to be had, when he took baptism and saide that he gave him to God and forsook the Devil. Now the king gave his doughter to the son of the emperour, *scil.* each one of us ought to give to God our soul in matrimony; for he is ready to receive her to his spouse [etc.].

HOW AN ANCHORESS WAS TEMPTED BY THE DEVIL

THERE was a woman some time in the world living that sawe the wretchedness, the sins, and the unstableness that was in the worlde; therefore she left all the worlde, and wente into the deserte, and lived there many years with roots and grasse, and such fruit as she might gete; and dranke water of the wellespryng, for othere livelihood had she none. Atte laste, when she had longe dwelled there in that place, the Devil in likenesse of a woman, come to this holy woman's place; and when he come there he knocked at the door. The holy woman come to the door and asked what she would? She saide, « I pray thee, dame, that thou wilt harbor me this night; for this day is at an end, and I am afeard that wild beasts should devour me.» The good woman saide, « For God's love ye are welcome to me; and take such as God sendeth.» They sat them down together, and the good woman sat and read saints' lives and other good things, till she come to this writing, « Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit shall be caste downe, and burnt in helle.» « That is sooth,» saide the Fiend, « and therefore I am adread; for if we lead oure life alone, therefore we shall have little meed, for when we dwelle alone we profit none but oure self. Therefore it were better, me thinketh, to go and dwelle among folke, for to give example to man and woman dwelling in this worlde. Then shall we have much meed.» When this was saide they went to reste. This good woman thought faste in her heart that she might not sleep nor have no rest, for the thing that the Fiend had said. Anon this woman arose and saide to the other woman, « This night might I have no reste for the words that thou saide yester even. Therefore I wot never what is best to be done for us.» Then the Devil said to her again, « It is best to go forth to profit to othere that shall be glad of oure coming, for that is much more worth than to live alone.» Then saide the woman to the Fiend, « Go we now forthe on oure way, for me thinketh it is not evil to essay.» And when she should go oute at the door, she stood still, and said thus, « Now, sweet Lady, Mother of mercy, and help at all need, now counsell me the beste, and keep me both body and soule from deadly sin.» When she had said these words with good heart and with good will, oure Lady come and laide her hande on her breast, and put her in again, and bade her that she should abide there, and not be led by falsehood of oure Enemy. The Fiend anon went away that she saw him no more there. Then she was full fain that she was kept and not beguiled of her enemy. Then she said on this wise to oure Blessed Lady that is full of mercy and goodnesse, « I thanke thee nowe with all my heart, specially for this keeping and many more that thou hast done to me oft since; and good Lady, keep me from henceforward.» Lo! here may men and women see how ready this good Lady is to help her servants at all their need, when they call to her for help, that they fall not in sin bestirring of the wicked enemy the false Fiend.



EDWARD GIBBON.

EDWARD GIBBON

(1737–1794)

BY W. E. H. LECKY

The history of Gibbon has been described by John Stuart Mill as the only eighteenth-century history that has withstood nineteenth-century criticism; and whatever objections modern critics may bring against some of its parts, the substantial justice of this verdict will scarcely be contested. No other history of that century has been so often reprinted, annotated, and discussed, or remains to the present day a capital authority on the great period of which it treats. As a composition it stands unchallenged and conspicuous among the masterpieces of English literature, while as a history it covers a space of more than twelve hundred years, including some of the most momentous events in the annals of mankind.

Gibbon was born at Putney, Surrey, April 27th, 1737. Though his father was a member of Parliament and the owner of a moderate competence, the author of this great work was essentially a self-educated man. Weak health and almost constant illness in early boyhood broke up his school life,—which appears to have been fitfully and most imperfectly conducted,—withdrew him from boyish games, but also gave him, as it has given to many other shy and sedentary boys, an early and inveterate passion for reading. His reading, however, was very unlike that of an ordinary boy. He has given a graphic picture of the ardor with which, when he was only fourteen, he flung himself into serious but unguided study; which was at first purely desultory, but gradually contracted into historic lines, and soon concentrated itself mainly on that Oriental history which he was one day so brilliantly to illuminate. «Before I was sixteen,» he says, «I had exhausted all that could be learned in English of the Arabs and Persians, the Tartars and Turks; and the same ardor led me to guess at the French of D'Herbelot, and to construe the barbarous Latin of Pocock's ‹Abulfaragius.›»

His health however gradually improved, and when he entered Magdalen College, Oxford, it might have been expected that a new period of intellectual development would have begun; but Oxford had at this time sunk to the lowest depth of stagnation, and to Gibbon it proved extremely uncongenial. He complained that he found no guidance, no stimulus, and no discipline, and that the fourteen months he spent there were the most idle and unprofitable of his life. They were very unexpectedly cut short by his conversion to the Roman Catholic faith, which he formally adopted at the age of sixteen.

This conversion is, on the whole, the most surprising incident of his calm and uneventful life. The tendencies of the time, both in England and on the Continent, were in a wholly different direction. The more spiritual and emotional natures were now passing into the religious revival of Wesley and Whitefield, which was slowly transforming the character of the Anglican Church and laying the foundations of the great Evangelical party. In other quarters the predominant tendencies were towards unbelief, skepticism, or indifference. Nature seldom formed a more skeptical intellect than that of Gibbon, and he was utterly without the spiritual insight, or spiritual cravings, or overmastering enthusiasms, that produce and explain most religious changes. Nor was he in the least drawn towards Catholicism on its æsthetic side. He had never come in contact with its worship or its professors; and to his unimaginative, unimpassioned, and profoundly intellectual temperament, no ideal type could be more uncongenial than that of the saint. He had however from early youth been keenly interested in theological controversies. He argued, like Lardner and Paley, that miracles are the Divine attestation of orthodoxy. Middleton convinced him that unless the Patristic writers were wholly undeserving of credit, the gift of miracles continued in the Church during the fourth and fifth centuries; and he was unable to resist the conclusion that during that period many of the leading doctrines of Catholicism had passed into the Church. The writings of the Jesuit Parsons, and still more the writings of Bossuet, completed the work which Middleton had begun. Having arrived at this conclusion, Gibbon acted on it with characteristic honesty, and was received into the Church on the 8th of June, 1753.

The English universities were at this time purely Anglican bodies, and the conversion of Gibbon excluded him from Oxford. His father judiciously sent him to Lausanne to study with a Swiss pastor named Pavilliard, with whom he spent five happy and profitable years. The theological episode was soon terminated. Partly under the influence of his teacher, but much more through his own reading and reflections, he soon disentangled the purely intellectual ties that bound him to the Church of Rome; and on Christmas Day, 1754, he received the sacrament in the Protestant church of Lausanne.

His residence at Lausanne was very useful to him. He had access to books in abundance, and his tutor, who was a man of great good sense and amiability but of no remarkable capacity, very judiciously left his industrious pupil to pursue his studies in his own way.

"Hiving wisdom with each studious year," as Byron so truly says, he speedily amassed a store of learning which has seldom been equaled. His insatiable love of knowledge, his rare capacity for concentrated, accurate, and fruitful study, guided by a singularly sure and masculine judgment, soon made him, in the true sense of the word, one of the best scholars of his time. His learning, however, was not altogether of the kind that may be found in a great university professor. Though the classical languages became familiar to him, he never acquired or greatly valued the minute and finished scholarship which is the boast of the chief English schools; and careful students have observed that in following Greek books he must have very largely used the Latin translations. Perhaps in his capacity of historian this deficiency was rather an advantage than the reverse. It saved him from the exaggerated value of classical form, and from the neglect of the more corrupt literatures, to which English scholars have been often prone. Gibbon always valued books mainly for what they contained, and he had early learned the lesson which all good historians should learn: that some of his most valuable materials will be found in literatures that have no artistic merit; in writers who, without theory and almost without criticism, simply relate the facts which they have seen, and express in unsophisticated language the beliefs and impressions of their time.

Lausanne and not Oxford was the real birthplace of his intellect, and he returned from it almost a foreigner. French had become as familiar to him as his own tongue; and his first book, a somewhat superficial essay on the study of literature, was published in the French language. The noble contemporary French literature filled him with delight, and he found on the borders of the Lake of Geneva a highly cultivated society to which he was soon introduced, and which probably gave him more real pleasure than any in which he afterwards moved. With Voltaire himself he had some slight acquaintance, and he at one time looked on him with profound admiration; though fuller knowledge made him sensible of the flaws in that splendid intellect. I am here concerned with the life of Gibbon only in as far as it discloses the influences that contributed to his master work, and among these influences the foreign element holds a prominent place. There was little in Gibbon that was distinctively English; his mind was essentially cosmopolitan. His tastes, ideals, and modes of thought and feeling turned instinctively to the Continent.

In one respect this foreign type was of great advantage to his work. Gibbon excels all other English historians in symmetry, proportion, perspective, and arrangement, which are also the pre-eminent and characteristic merits of the best French literature. We find in his writing nothing of the great miscalculations of space that were made by such writers as Macaulay and Buckle; nothing of the awkward repetitions, the confused arrangement, the semi-detached and disjointed episodes that mar the beauty of many other histories of no small merit. Vast and multifarious as are the subjects which he has treated, his work is a great whole, admirably woven in all its parts. On the other hand, his foreign taste may perhaps be seen in his neglect of the Saxon element, which is the most vigorous and homely element in English prose. Probably in no other English writer does the Latin element so entirely predominate. Gibbon never wrote an unmeaning and very seldom an obscure sentence; he could always paint with sustained and stately eloquence an illustrious character or a splendid scene: but he was wholly wanting in the grace of simplicity, and a monotony of glitter and of mannerism is the great defect of his style. He possessed, to a degree which even Tacitus and Bacon had hardly surpassed, the supreme literary gift of condensation, and it gives an admirable force and vividness to his narrative; but it is sometimes carried to excess. Not unfrequently it is attained by an excessive allusiveness, and a wide knowledge of the subject is needed to enable the reader to perceive the full import and meaning conveyed or hinted at by a mere turn of phrase. But though his style is artificial and pedantic, and greatly wanting in flexibility, it has a rare power of clinging to the memory, and it has profoundly influenced English prose. That excellent judge Cardinal Newman has said of Gibbon, «I seem to trace his vigorous condensation and peculiar rhythm at every turn in the literature of the present day.»

It is not necessary to relate here in any detail the later events of the life of Gibbon. There was his enlistment as captain in the Hampshire militia. It involved two and a half years of active service, extending from May 1760 to December 1762; and as Gibbon afterwards acknowledged, if it interrupted his studies and brought him into very uncongenial duties and societies, it at least greatly enlarged his acquaintance with English life, and also gave him a knowledge of the rudiments of military science, which was not without its use to the historian of so many battles. There was a long journey, lasting for two years and five months, in France and Italy, which greatly confirmed his foreign tendencies. In Paris he moved familiarly in some of the best French literary society; and in Rome, as he tells us in a well-known passage, while he sat «musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol while the barefooted friars were singing vespers in the Temple of Jupiter» (which is now the Church of the Ara Cœli),—on October 15th, 1764,—he first conceived the idea of writing the history of the decline and fall of Rome.

There was also that very curious episode in his life, lasting from 1774 to 1782,—his appearance in the House of Commons. He had declined an offer of his father's to purchase a seat for him in 1760; and fourteen years later, when his father was dead, when his own circumstances were considerably contracted, he received and accepted at the hands of a family connection the offer of a seat. His Parliamentary career was entirely undistinguished, and he never even opened his mouth in debate,—a fact which was not forgotten when very recently another historian was candidate for a seat in Parliament. In truth, this somewhat shy and reserved scholar, with his fastidious taste, his eminently judicial mind, and his highly condensed and elaborate style, was singularly unfit for the rough work of Parliamentary discussion. No one can read his books without perceiving that his English was not that of a debater; and he has candidly admitted that he entered Parliament without public spirit or serious interest in politics, and that he valued it chiefly as leading to an office which might restore the fortune which the extravagance of his father had greatly impaired. His only real public service was the composition in French of a reply to the French manifesto which was issued at the beginning of the war of 1778. He voted steadily and placidly as a Tory, and it is not probable that in doing so he did any violence to his opinions. Like Hume, he shrank with an instinctive dislike from all popular agitations, from all turbulence, passion, exaggeration, and enthusiasm; and a temperate and well-ordered despotism was evidently his ideal. He showed it in the well-known passage in which he extols the benevolent despotism of the Antonines as without exception the happiest period in the history of mankind, and in the unmixed horror with which he looked upon the French Revolution that broke up the old landmarks of Europe. For three years he held an office in the Board of Trade, which added considerably to his income without adding greatly to his labors, and he supported steadily the American policy of Lord North and the Coalition ministry of North and Fox; but the loss of his office and the retirement of North soon drove him from Parliament, and he shortly after took up his residence at Lausanne.

But before this time a considerable part of his great work had been accomplished. The first quarto volume of the 'Decline and Fall' appeared in February 1776. As is usually the case with historical works, it occupied a much longer period than its successors, and was the fruit of about ten years of labor. It passed rapidly through three editions, received the enthusiastic eulogy of Hume and Robertson, and was no doubt greatly assisted in its circulation by the storm of controversy that arose about his Fifteenth and Sixteenth Chapters. In April 1781 two more volumes appeared, and the three concluding volumes were published together on the 8th of May, 1788, being the fifty-first birthday of the author.

A work of such magnitude, dealing with so vast a variety of subjects, was certain to exhibit some flaws. The controversy at first turned mainly upon its religious tendency. The complete skepticism of the author, his aversion to the ecclesiastical type which dominated in the period of which he wrote, and his unalterable conviction that Christianity, by diverting the strength and enthusiasm of the Empire from civic into ascetic and ecclesiastical channels, was a main cause of the downfall of the Empire and of the triumph of barbarism, gave him a bias which it was impossible to overlook. On no other subject is his irony more bitter or his contempt so manifestly displayed. Few good critics will deny that the growth of the ascetic spirit had a large part in corroding and enfeebling the civic virtues of the Empire; but the part which it played was that of intensifying a disease that had already begun, and Gibbon, while exaggerating the amount of the evil, has very imperfectly described the great services rendered even by a monastic Church in laying the basis of another civilization and in mitigating the calamities of the barbarian invasion. The causes he has given of the spread of Christianity in the Fifteenth Chapter were for the most part true causes, but there were others of which he was wholly insensible. The strong moral enthusiasms that transform the character and inspire or accelerate all great religious changes lay wholly beyond the sphere of his realizations. His language about the Christian martyrs is the most repulsive portion of his work; and his comparison of the sufferings caused by pagan and Christian persecutions is greatly vitiated by the fact that he only takes account of the number of deaths, and lays no stress on the profuse employment of atrocious tortures, which was one of the most distinct features of the pagan persecutions. At the same time, though Gibbon displays in this field a manifest and a distorting bias, he never, like some of his French contemporaries, sinks into the mere partisan, awarding to one side unqualified eulogy and to the other unqualified contempt. Let the reader who doubts this examine and compare his masterly portraits of Julian and of Athanasius, and he will perceive how clearly the great historian could recognize weaknesses in the characters by which he was most attracted, and elements of true greatness in those by which he was most repelled. A modern writer, in treating of the history of religions, would have given a larger space to comparative religion, and to the gradual, unconscious, and spontaneous growth of myths in the twilight periods of the human mind. These however were subjects which were scarcely known in the days of Gibbon, and he cannot be blamed for not having discussed them.

Another class of objections which has been brought against him is that he is weak upon the philosophical side, and deals with history mainly as a mere chronicle of events, and not as a chain of causes and consequences, a series of problems to be solved, a gradual evolution which it is the task of the historian to explain. Coleridge, who detested Gibbon and spoke of him with gross injustice, has put this objection in the strongest form. He accuses him of having reduced history to a mere collection of splendid anecdotes; of noting nothing but what may produce an effect; of skipping from eminence to eminence without ever taking his readers through the valleys between; of having never made a single philosophical attempt to fathom the ultimate causes of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire, which is the very subject of his history. That such charges are grossly exaggerated will be apparent to any one who will carefully read the Second and Third Chapters, describing the state and tendencies of the Empire under the Antonines; or the chapters devoted to the rise and character of the barbarians, to the spread of Christianity, to the influence of monasticism, to the jurisprudence of the republic and of the Empire; nor would it be difficult to collect many acute and profound philosophical remarks from other portions of the history. Still, it may be admitted that the philosophical side is not its strongest part. Social and economical changes are sometimes inadequately examined and explained, and we often desire fuller information about the manners and life of the masses of the people. As far as concerns the age of the Antonines, this want has been amply supplied by the great work of Friedländer.

History, like many other things in our generation, has fallen largely into the hands of specialists; and it is inevitable that men who have devoted their lives to a minute examination of short periods should be able to detect some deficiencies and errors in a writer who traversed a period of more than twelve hundred years. Many generations of scholars have arisen since Gibbon; many new sources of knowledge have become available, and archæology especially has thrown a flood of new light on some of the subjects he treated. Though his knowledge and his narrative are on the whole admirably sustained, there are periods which he knew less well and treated less fully than others. His account of the Crusades is generally acknowledged to be one of the most conspicuous of these, and within the last few years there has arisen a school of historians who protest against the low opinion of the Byzantine Empire which was held by Gibbon, and was almost universal among scholars till the present generation. That these writers have brought into relief certain merits of the Lower Empire which Gibbon had neglected, will not be denied; but it is perhaps too early to decide whether the reaction has not, like most reactions, been carried to extravagance, and whether in its general features the estimate of Gibbon is not nearer the truth than some of those which are now put forward to replace it.

Much must no doubt be added to the work of Gibbon in order to bring it up to the level of our present knowledge; but there is no sign that any single work is likely to supersede it or to render it useless to the student; nor does its survival depend only or even mainly on its great literary qualities, which have made it one of the classics of the language. In some of these qualities Hume was the equal of Gibbon and in others his superior, and he brought to his history a more penetrating and philosophical intellect and an equally calm and unenthusiastic nature; but the study which Hume bestowed on his subject was so superficial and his statements were often so inaccurate, that his work is now never quoted as an authority. With Gibbon it is quite otherwise. His marvelous industry, his almost unrivaled accuracy of detail, his sincere love of truth, his rare discrimination and insight in weighing testimony and in judging character, have given him a secure place among the greatest historians of the world.

His life lasted only fifty-six years; he died in London on January 15th, 1794. With a single exception his history is his only work of real importance. That exception is his admirable autobiography. Gibbon left behind him six distinct sketches, which his friend Lord Sheffield put together with singular skill. It is one of the best specimens of self-portraiture in the language, reflecting with pellucid clearness both the life and character, the merits and defects, of its author. He was certainly neither a hero nor a saint; nor did he possess the moral and intellectual qualities that dominate in the great conflicts of life, sway the passions of men, appeal powerfully to the imagination, or dazzle and impress in social intercourse. He was a little slow, a little pompous, a little affected and pedantic. In the general type of his mind and character he bore much more resemblance to Hume, Adam Smith, or Reynolds, than to Johnson or Burke. A reserved scholar, who was rather proud of being a man of the world; a confirmed bachelor, much wedded to his comforts though caring nothing for luxury, he was eminently moderate in his ambitions, and there was not a trace of passion or enthusiasm in his nature. Such a man was not likely to inspire any strong devotion. But his temper was most kindly, equable, and contented; he was a steady friend, and he appears to have been always liked and honored in the cultivated and uncontentious society in which he delighted. His life was not a great one, but it was in all essentials blameless and happy. He found the work which was most congenial to him. He pursued it with admirable industry and with brilliant success, and he left behind him a book which is not likely to be forgotten while the English language endures.

WEH Lecky

ZENOBIA

Aurelian had no sooner secured the person and provinces of Tetricus, than he turned his arms against Zenobia, the celebrated queen of Palmyra and the East. Modern Europe has produced several illustrious women who have sustained with glory the weight of empire; nor is our own age destitute of such distinguished characters. But if we except the doubtful achievements of Semiramis, Zenobia is perhaps the only female whose superior genius broke through the servile indolence imposed on her sex by the climate and manners of Asia. She claimed her descent from the Macedonian kings of Egypt, equaled in beauty her ancestor Cleopatra, and far surpassed that princess in chastity and valor. Zenobia was esteemed the most lovely as well as the most heroic of her sex. She was of a dark complexion (for in speaking of a lady these trifles become important). Her teeth were of a pearly whiteness, and her large black eyes sparkled with uncommon fire, tempered by the most attractive sweetness. Her voice was strong and harmonious. Her manly understanding was strengthened and adorned by study. She was not ignorant of the Latin tongue, but possessed in equal perfection the Greek, the Syriac, and the Egyptian languages. She had drawn up for her own use an epitome of Oriental history, and familiarly compared the beauties of Homer and Plato under the tuition of the sublime Longinus.

This accomplished woman gave her hand to Odenathus, who, from a private station, raised himself to the dominion of the East. She soon became the friend and companion of a hero. In the intervals of war, Odenathus passionately delighted in the exercise of hunting; he pursued with ardor the wild beasts of the desert,—lions, panthers, and bears; and the ardor of Zenobia in that dangerous amusement was not inferior to his own. She had inured her constitution to fatigue, disdained the use of a covered carriage, generally appeared on horseback in a military habit, and sometimes marched several miles on foot at the head of the troops. The success of Odenathus was in a great measure ascribed to her incomparable prudence and fortitude. Their splendid victories over the Great King, whom they twice pursued as far as the gates of Ctesiphon, laid the foundations of their united fame and power. The armies which they commanded, and the provinces which they had saved, acknowledged not any other sovereigns than their invincible chiefs. The Senate and people of Rome revered a stranger who had avenged their captive emperor, and even the insensible son of Valerian accepted Odenathus for his legitimate colleague.

After a successful expedition against the Gothic plunderers of Asia, the Palmyrenian prince returned to the city of Emesa in Syria. Invincible in war, he was there cut off by domestic treason; and his favorite amusement of hunting was the cause, or at least the occasion, of his death. His nephew Mæonius presumed to dart his javelin before that of his uncle; and though admonished of his error, repeated the same insolence. As a monarch and as a sportsman, Odenathus was provoked, took away his horse, a mark of ignominy among the barbarians, and chastised the rash youth by a short confinement. The offense was soon forgot, but the punishment was remembered; and Mæonius, with a few daring associates, assassinated his uncle in the midst of a great entertainment. Herod, the son of Odenathus, though not of Zenobia, a young man of a soft and effeminate temper, was killed with his father. But Mæonius obtained only the pleasure of revenge by this bloody deed. He had scarcely time to assume the title of Augustus, before he was sacrificed by Zenobia to the memory of her husband.

With the assistance of his most faithful friends, she immediately filled the vacant throne, and governed with manly counsels Palmyra, Syria, and the East, above five years. By the death of Odenathus, that authority was at an end which the Senate had granted him only as a personal distinction; but his martial widow, disdaining both the Senate and Gallienus, obliged one of the Roman generals who was sent against her to retreat into Europe, with the loss of his army and his reputation. Instead of the little passions which so frequently perplex a female reign, the steady administration of Zenobia was guided by the most judicious maxims of policy. If it was expedient to pardon, she could calm her resentment; if it was necessary to punish, she could impose silence on the voice of pity. Her strict economy was accused of avarice; yet on every proper occasion she appeared magnificent and liberal. The neighboring States of Arabia, Armenia, and Persia dreaded her enmity and solicited her alliance. To the dominions of Odenathus, which extended from the Euphrates to the frontiers of Bithynia, his widow added the inheritance of her ancestors, the populous and fertile kingdom of Egypt. The Emperor Claudius acknowledged her merit, and was content that while *he* pursued the Gothic war, *she* should assert the dignity of the Empire in the East. The conduct however of Zenobia was attended with some ambiguity, nor is it unlikely that she had conceived the design of erecting an independent and hostile monarchy. She blended with the popular manners of Roman princes the stately pomp of the courts of Asia, and exacted from her subjects the same adoration that was paid to the successors of Cyrus. She bestowed on her three sons a Latin education, and often showed them to the troops adorned with the imperial purple. For herself she reserved the diadem, with the splendid but doubtful title of Queen of the East.

When Aurelian passed over into Asia against an adversary whose sex alone could render her an object of contempt, his presence restored obedience to the province of Bithynia, already shaken by the arms and intrigues of Zenobia. Advancing at the head of his legions, he accepted the submission of Ancyra, and was admitted into Tyana, after an obstinate siege, by the help of a perfidious citizen. The generous though fierce temper of Aurelian abandoned the traitor to the rage of the soldiers: a superstitious reverence induced him to treat with lenity the countrymen of Apollonius the philosopher. Antioch was deserted on his approach, till the Emperor, by his salutary edicts, recalled the fugitives, and granted a general pardon to all who from necessity rather than choice had been engaged in the service of the Palmyrenian Queen. The unexpected mildness of such a conduct reconciled the minds of the Syrians, and as far as the gates of Emesa the wishes of the people seconded the terror of his arms.

Zenobia would have ill deserved her reputation, had she indolently permitted the Emperor of the West to approach within a hundred miles of her capital. The fate of the East was decided in two great battles, so similar in almost every circumstance that we can scarcely distinguish them from each other, except by observing that the first was fought near Antioch and the second near Emesa. In both the Queen of Palmyra animated the armies by her presence, and devolved the execution of her orders on Zabdas, who had already signalized his military talents by the conquest of Egypt. The numerous forces of Zenobia consisted for the most part of light archers, and of heavy cavalry clothed in complete steel. The Moorish and Illyrian horse of Aurelian were unable to sustain the ponderous charge of their antagonists. They fled in real or affected disorder, engaged the Palmyrenians in a laborious pursuit, harassed them by a desultory combat, and at length discomfited this impenetrable but unwieldy body of cavalry. The light infantry, in the mean time, when they had exhausted their quivers, remaining without protection against a closer onset, exposed their naked sides to the swords of the legions. Aurelian had chosen these veteran troops, who were usually stationed on the Upper Danube, and whose valor had been severely tried in the Alemannic war. After the defeat of Emesa, Zenobia found it impossible to collect a third army. As far as the frontier of Egypt, the nations subject to her empire had joined the standard of the conqueror, who detached Probus, the bravest of his generals, to possess himself of the Egyptian provinces. Palmyra was the last resource of the widow of Odenathus. She retired within the walls of her capital, made every preparation for a vigorous resistance, and declared, with the intrepidity of a heroine, that the last moment of her reign and of her life should be the same.

Amid the barren deserts of Arabia, a few cultivated spots rise like islands out of the sandy ocean. Even the name of Tadmor, or Palmyra, by its signification in the Syriac as well as in the Latin language, denoted the multitude of palm-trees which afforded shade and verdure to that temperate region. The air was pure, and the soil, watered by some invaluable springs, was capable of producing fruits as well as corn. A place possessed of such singular advantages, and situated at a convenient distance between the Gulf of Persia and the Mediterranean,* was soon frequented by the caravans which conveyed to the nations of Europe a considerable part of the rich commodities of India. Palmyra insensibly increased into an opulent and independent city, and connecting the Roman and the Parthian monarchies by the mutual benefits of commerce, was suffered to observe a humble neutrality, till at length after the victories of Trajan the little republic sunk into the bosom of Rome, and flourished more than one hundred and fifty years in the subordinate though honorable rank of a colony. It was during that peaceful period, if we may judge from a few remaining inscriptions, that the wealthy Palmyrenians constructed those temples, palaces, and porticos of Grecian architecture whose ruins, scattered over an extent of several miles, have deserved the curiosity of our travelers. The elevation of Odenathus and Zenobia appeared to reflect new splendor on their country, and Palmyra for a while stood forth the rival of Rome: but the competition was fatal, and ages of prosperity were sacrificed to a moment of glory.

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*Five hundred and thirty-seven miles from Seleucia, two hundred and three from the nearest coast of Syria, according to Pliny.

In his march over the sandy desert between Emesa and Palmyra, the Emperor Aurelian was perpetually harassed by the Arabs; nor could he always defend his army, and especially his baggage, from those flying troops of active and daring robbers who watched the moment of surprise and eluded the slow pursuit of the legions. The siege of Palmyra was an object far more difficult and important, and the Emperor, who with incessant vigor pressed the attacks in person, was himself wounded with a dart. «The Roman people,» says Aurelian, in an original letter, «speak with contempt of the war which I am waging against a woman. They are ignorant both of the character and of the power of Zenobia. It is impossible to enumerate her warlike preparations of stones, of arrows, and of every species of missile weapons. Every part of the walls is provided with two or three *balistæ*, and artificial fires are thrown from her military engines. The fear of punishment has armed her with a desperate courage. Yet still I trust in the protecting deities of Rome, who have hitherto been favorable to all my undertakings.» Doubtful, however, of the protection of the gods and of the event of the siege, Aurelian judged it more prudent to offer terms of an advantageous capitulation: to the Queen, a splendid retreat; to the citizens, their ancient privileges. His proposals were obstinately rejected, and the refusal was accompanied with insult.

The firmness of Zenobia was supported by the hope that in a very short time famine would compel the Roman army to repass the desert, and by the reasonable expectation that the kings of the East, and particularly the Persian monarch, would arm in the defense of their most natural ally. But fortune and the perseverance of Aurelian overcame every obstacle. The death of Sapor, which happened about this time, distracted the counsels of Persia, and the inconsiderable succors that attempted to relieve Palmyra were easily intercepted either by the arms or the liberality of the Emperor. From every part of Syria a regular succession of convoys safely arrived in the camp, which was increased by the return of Probus with his victorious troops from the conquest of

Egypt. It was then that Zenobia resolved to fly. She mounted the fleetest of her dromedaries, and had already reached the banks of the Euphrates, about sixty miles from Palmyra, when she was overtaken by the pursuit of Aurelian's light horse, seized, and brought back a captive to the feet of the Emperor. Her capital soon afterwards surrendered, and was treated with unexpected lenity. The arms, horses, and camels, with an immense treasure of gold, silver, silk, and precious stones, were all delivered to the conqueror, who, leaving only a garrison of six hundred archers, returned to Emesa and employed some time in the distribution of rewards and punishments at the end of so memorable a war, which restored to the obedience of Rome those provinces that had renounced their allegiance since the captivity of Valerian.

When the Syrian Queen was brought into the presence of Aurelian he sternly asked her, How she had presumed to rise in arms against the emperors of Rome! The answer of Zenobia was a prudent mixture of respect and firmness: « Because I disdained to consider as Roman emperors an Aureolus or a Gallienus. You alone I acknowledge as my conqueror and my sovereign.» But as female fortitude is commonly artificial, so it is seldom steady or consistent. The courage of Zenobia deserted her in the hour of trial; she trembled at the angry clamors of the soldiers, who called aloud for her immediate execution, forgot the generous despair of Cleopatra which she had proposed as her model, and ignominiously purchased life by the sacrifice of her fame and her friends. It was to their counsels, which governed the weakness of her sex, that she imputed the guilt of her obstinate resistance; it was on their heads that she directed the vengeance of the cruel Aurelian. The fame of Longinus, who was included among the numerous and perhaps innocent victims of her fear, will survive that of the Queen who betrayed or the tyrant who condemned him. Genius and learning were incapable of moving a fierce unlettered soldier, but they had served to elevate and harmonize the soul of Longinus. Without uttering a complaint he calmly followed the executioner, pitying his unhappy mistress, and bestowing comfort on his afflicted friends. . . .

But, however in the treatment of his unfortunate rivals Aurelian might indulge his pride, he behaved towards them with a generous clemency which was seldom exercised by the ancient conquerors. Princes who without success had defended their throne or freedom, were frequently strangled in prison as soon as the triumphal pomp ascended the Capitol. These usurpers, whom their defeat had convicted of the crime of treason, were permitted to spend their lives in affluence and honorable repose. The Emperor presented Zenobia with an elegant villa at Tibur, or Tivoli, about twenty miles from the capital; the Syrian queen insensibly sunk into a Roman matron, her daughters married into noble families, and her race was not yet extinct in the fifth century.

FOUNDATION OF CONSTANTINOPLE

We are at present qualified to view the advantageous position of Constantinople, which appears to have been formed by nature for the centre and capital of a great monarchy. Situated in the forty-first degree of latitude, the imperial city commanded from her seven hills the opposite shores of Europe and Asia; the climate was healthy and temperate, the soil fertile, the harbor secure and capacious; and the approach on the side of the continent was of small extent and easy defense. The Bosphorus and the Hellespont may be considered as the two gates of Constantinople; and the prince who possessed those important passages could always shut them against a naval enemy and open them to the fleets of commerce. The preservation of the eastern provinces may in some degree be ascribed to the policy of Constantine, as the barbarians of the Euxine, who in the preceding age had poured their armaments into the heart of the Mediterranean, soon desisted from the exercise of piracy, and despaired of forcing this insurmountable barrier. When the gates of the Hellespont and Bosphorus were shut, the capital still enjoyed within their spacious inclosure every production which could supply the wants or gratify the luxury of its numerous inhabitants. The sea-coasts of Thrace and Bithynia, which languish under the weight of Turkish oppression, still exhibit a rich prospect of vineyards, of gardens, and of plentiful harvests; and the Propontis has ever been renowned for an inexhaustible store of the most exquisite fish, that are taken in their stated seasons without skill and almost without labor. But when the passages of the straits were thrown open for trade, they alternately admitted the natural and artificial riches of the North and South, of the Euxine and of the Mediterranean. Whatever rude commodities were collected in the forests of Germany and Scythia, as far as the sources of the Tanais and the Borysthenes; whatsoever was manufactured by the skill of Europe or Asia; the corn of Egypt, and the gems and spices of the farthest India, were brought by the varying winds into the port of Constantinople, which for many ages attracted the commerce of the ancient world.

The prospect of beauty, of safety, and of wealth, united in a single spot, was sufficient to justify the choice of Constantine. But as some decent mixture of prodigy and fable has in every age been supposed to reflect a becoming majesty on the origin of great cities, the Emperor was desirous of ascribing his resolution, not so much to the uncertain counsels of human policy as to the infallible and eternal decrees of Divine wisdom. In one of his laws he has been careful to instruct posterity that in obedience to the commands of God he laid the everlasting foundations of Constantinople: and though he has not condescended to relate in what manner the celestial inspiration was communicated to his mind, the defect of his modest silence has been liberally supplied by the ingenuity of succeeding writers, who describe the nocturnal vision which appeared to the fancy of Constantine as he slept within the walls of Byzantium. The tutelar genius of the city, a venerable matron sinking under the weight of years and infirmities, was suddenly transformed into a blooming maid, whom his own hands adorned with all the symbols of imperial greatness. The monarch awoke, interpreted the auspicious omen, and obeyed without hesitation the will of Heaven. The day which gave birth to a city or colony was celebrated by the Romans with such ceremonies as had been ordained by a generous superstition; and though Constantine might omit some rites which savored too strongly of their pagan origin, yet he was anxious to leave a deep impression of hope and respect on the minds of the spectators. On foot, with a lance in his hand, the Emperor himself led the solemn procession, and directed the line which was traced as the boundary of the destined capital; till the growing circumference was observed with astonishment by the assistants, who at length ventured to observe that he had already exceeded the most ample measure of a great city. "I shall still advance," replied Constantine, "till HE, the invisible guide who marches before me, thinks proper to stop." Without presuming to investigate the nature or motives of this extraordinary conductor, we shall content ourselves with the more humble task of describing the extent and limits of Constantinople.

In the actual state of the city, the palace and gardens of the Seraglio occupy the eastern promontory, the first of the seven hills, and cover about one hundred and fifty acres of our own measure. The seat of Turkish jealousy and despotism is erected on the foundations of a Grecian republic; but it may be supposed that the Byzantines were tempted by the conveniency of the harbor to extend their habitations on that side beyond the modern limits of the Seraglio. The new walls of Constantine stretched from the port to the Propontis across the enlarged breadth of the triangle, at a distance of fifteen stadia from the ancient fortification; and with the city of Byzantium they inclosed five of the seven hills which, to the eyes of those who approach Constantinople, appear to rise above each other in beautiful order. About a century after the death of the founder, the new buildings, extending on one side up the harbor and on the other along the Propontis, already covered the narrow ridge of the sixth and the broad summit of the seventh hill. The necessity of protecting those suburbs from the incessant inroads of the barbarians engaged the younger Theodosius to surround his capital with an adequate and permanent inclosure of walls. From the eastern promontory to the Golden Gate, the extreme length of Constantinople was about three Roman miles; the circumference measured between ten and eleven, and the surface might be computed as equal to about two thousand English acres. It is impossible to justify the vain and credulous exaggerations of modern travelers, who have sometimes stretched the limits of Constantinople over the adjacent villages of the European, and even of the Asiatic coast. But the suburbs of Pera and Galata, though situate beyond the harbor, may deserve to be considered as a part of the city; and this addition may perhaps authorize the measure of a Byzantine historian, who assigns sixteen Greek (about fourteen Roman) miles for the circumference of his native city. Such an extent may not seem unworthy of an imperial residence. Yet Constantinople must yield to Babylon and Thebes, to ancient Rome, to London, and even to Paris.

The master of the Roman world, who aspired to erect an eternal monument of the glories of his reign, could employ in the prosecution of that great work the wealth, the labor, and all that yet remained of the genius of obedient millions. Some estimate may be formed of the expense bestowed with imperial liberality on the foundation of Constantinople, by the allowance of about two millions five hundred thousand pounds for the construction of the walls, the porticos, and the aqueducts. The forests that overshadowed the shores of the Euxine, and the celebrated quarries of white marble in the little island of Proconnesus, supplied an inexhaustible stock of materials, ready to be conveyed, by the convenience of a short water carriage, to the harbor of Byzantium. A multitude of laborers and artificers urged the conclusion of the work with incessant toil; but the impatience of Constantine soon discovered that, in the decline of the arts, the skill as well as numbers of his architects bore a very unequal proportion to the greatness of his designs. The magistrates of the most distant provinces were therefore directed to institute schools, to appoint professors, and by the hopes of rewards and privileges to engage in the study and practice of architecture a sufficient number of ingenious youths who had received a liberal education. The buildings of the new city were executed by such artificers as the reign of Constantine could afford; but they were decorated by the hands of the most celebrated masters of the age of Pericles and Alexander. To revive the genius of Phidias and Lysippus surpassed indeed the power of a Roman emperor; but the immortal productions which they had bequeathed to posterity were exposed without defense to the rapacious vanity of a despot. By his commands the cities of Greece and Asia were despoiled of their most valuable ornaments. The trophies of memorable wars, the objects of religious veneration, the most finished statues of the gods and heroes, of the sages and poets of ancient times, contributed to the splendid triumph of Constantinople, and gave occasion to the remark of the historian Cedrenus, who observes with some enthusiasm that nothing seemed wanting except the souls of the illustrious men whom these admirable monuments were intended to represent. But it is not in the city of Constantine, nor in the declining period of an empire, when the human mind was depressed by civil and religious slavery, that we should seek for the souls of Homer and of Demosthenes.

During the siege of Byzantium, the conqueror had pitched his tent on the commanding eminence of the second hill. To perpetuate the memory of his success, he chose the same advantageous position for the principal Forum, which appears to have been of a circular or rather elliptical form. The two opposite entrances formed triumphal arches; the porticos which inclosed it on every side were filled with statues; and the centre of the Forum was occupied by a lofty column, of which a mutilated fragment is now degraded by the appellation of the *burnt pillar*. This column was erected on a pedestal of white marble twenty feet high, and was composed of ten pieces of porphyry, each of which measured about ten feet in height and about thirty-three in circumference. On the summit of the pillar, above one hundred and twenty feet from the ground, stood the colossal statue of Apollo. It was of bronze, had been transported either from Athens or from a town of Phrygia, and was supposed to be the work of Phidias. The artist had represented the god of day, or as it was afterwards interpreted, the Emperor Constantine himself with a sceptre in his right hand, the globe of the world in his left, and a crown of rays glittering on his head. The Circus, or Hippodrome, was a stately building about four hundred paces in length and one hundred in breadth. The space between the two *metæ* or goals was filled with statues and obelisks; and we may still remark a very singular fragment of antiquity — the bodies of three serpents twisted into one pillar of brass. Their triple heads had once supported the golden tripod which, after the defeat of Xerxes, was consecrated in the temple of Delphi by the victorious Greeks. The beauty of the Hippodrome has been long since defaced by the rude hands of the Turkish conquerors; but under the similar appellation of Atmeidan, it still serves as a place of exercise for their horses. From the throne whence the Emperor viewed the Circensian games, a winding staircase descended to the palace: a magnificent edifice which scarcely yielded to the residence of Rome itself, and which, together with the dependent courts, gardens, and porticos, covered a considerable extent of ground upon the banks of the Propontis between the Hippodrome and the church of St. Sophia. We might likewise celebrate the baths, which still retained the name of Zeuxippus, after they had been enriched by the munificence of Constantine with lofty columns, various marbles, and above threescore statues of bronze. But we should deviate from the design of this history if we attempted minutely to describe the different buildings or quarters of the city. It may be sufficient to observe that whatever could adorn the dignity of a great capital, or contribute to the benefit or pleasure of its numerous inhabitants, was contained within the walls of Constantinople. A particular description, composed about a century after its foundation, enumerates a capitol or school of learning, a circus, two theatres, eight public and one hundred and fifty-three private baths, fifty-two porticos, five granaries, eight aqueducts or reservoirs of water, four spacious halls for the meetings of the senate or courts of justice, fourteen churches, fourteen palaces, and four thousand three hundred and eighty-eight houses which for their size or beauty deserved to be distinguished from the multitude of plebeian habitations.

The populousness of his favored city was the next and most serious object of the attention of its founder. In the dark ages which succeeded the translation of the empire, the remote and the immediate consequences of that memorable event were strangely confounded by the vanity of the Greeks and the credulity of the Latins. It was asserted and believed that all the noble families of Rome, the Senate, and the equestrian order, with their innumerable attendants, had followed their Emperor to the banks of the Propontis; that a spurious race of strangers and plebeians was left to possess the solitude of the ancient capital; and that the lands of Italy, long since converted into gardens, were at once deprived of cultivation and inhabitants. In the course of this history such exaggerations will be reduced to their just value: yet, since the growth of Constantinople cannot be ascribed to the general increase of mankind and of industry, it must be admitted that this artificial colony was raised at the expense of the ancient cities of the empire. Many opulent senators of Rome and of the eastern provinces were probably invited by Constantine to adopt for their country the fortunate spot which he had chosen for his own residence. The invitations of a master are scarcely to be distinguished from commands; and the liberality of the Emperor obtained a ready and cheerful obedience. He bestowed on his favorites the palaces which he had built in the several quarters of the city, assigned them lands and pensions for the support of their dignity, and alienated the demesnes of Pontus and Asia to grant hereditary estates by the easy tenure of maintaining a house in the capital. But these encouragements and obligations soon became superfluous, and were gradually abolished. Wherever the seat of government is fixed, a considerable part of the public revenue will be expended by the prince himself, by his ministers, by the officers of justice, and by the domestics of the palace. The most wealthy of the provincials will be attracted by the powerful motives of interest and duty, of amusement and curiosity. A third and more numerous class of inhabitants will insensibly be formed, of servants, of artificers, and of merchants, who derive their subsistence from their own labor and from the wants or luxury of the superior ranks. In less than a century Constantinople disputed with Rome itself the pre-eminence of riches and numbers. New piles of buildings, crowded together with too little regard to health or convenience, scarcely allowed the intervals of narrow streets for the perpetual throng of men, of horses, and of carriages. The allotted space of ground was insufficient to contain the increasing people; and the additional foundations, which on either side were advanced into the sea, might alone have composed a very considerable city.

The frequent and regular distributions of wine and oil, of corn or bread, of money or provisions, had almost exempted the poorer citizens of Rome from the necessity of labor. The magnificence of the first Cæsars was in some measure imitated by the founder of Constantinople; but his liberality, however it might excite the applause of the people, has incurred the censure of posterity. A nation of legislators and conquerors might assert their claim to the harvests of Africa, which had been purchased with their blood; and it was artfully contrived by Augustus that in the enjoyment of plenty the Romans should lose the memory of freedom. But the prodigality of Constantine could not be excused by any consideration either of public or private interest; and the annual tribute of corn imposed upon Egypt for the benefit of his new capital was applied to feed a lazy and insolent populace at the expense of the husbandmen of an industrious province. Some other regulations of this Emperor are less liable to blame, but they are less deserving of notice. He divided Constantinople into fourteen regions or quarters, dignified the public council with the appellation of senate, communicated to the citizens the privileges of Italy, and bestowed on the rising city the title of colony, the first and most favored daughter of ancient Rome. The venerable parent still maintained the legal and acknowledged supremacy which was due to her age, her dignity, and to the remembrance of her former greatness.

As Constantine urged the progress of the work with the impatience of a lover, the walls, the porticos, and the principal edifices were completed in a few years, or according to another account, in a few months; but this extraordinary diligence should excite the less admiration, since many of the buildings were finished in so hasty and imperfect a manner that under the succeeding reign they were preserved with difficulty from impending ruin. But while they displayed the vigor and freshness of youth, the founder prepared to celebrate the dedication of his city. The games and largesses which crowned the pomp of this memorable festival may easily be supposed; but there is one circumstance of a more singular and permanent nature which ought not entirely to be overlooked. As often as the birthday of the city returned, the statue of Constantine, framed by his order, of gilt wood, and bearing in its right hand a small image of the genius of the place, was erected on a triumphal car. The guards, carrying white tapers and clothed in their richest apparel, accompanied the solemn procession as it moved through the Hippodrome. When it was opposite to the throne of the reigning emperor, he rose from his seat, and with grateful reverence adored the memory of his predecessor. At the festival of the dedication an edict, engraved on a column of marble, bestowed the title of SECOND or NEW ROME on the city of Constantine. But the name of Constantinople has prevailed over that honorable epithet, and after the revolution of fourteen centuries still perpetuates the fame of its author.

CHARACTER OF CONSTANTINE

THE character of the prince who removed the seat of empire, and introduced such important changes into the civil and religious constitution of his country, has fixed the attention and divided the opinions of mankind. By the grateful zeal of the Christians, the deliverer of the Church has been decorated with every attribute of a hero and even of a saint, while the discontent of the vanquished party has compared Constantine to the most abhorred of those tyrants who by their vice and weakness dishonored the imperial purple. The same passions have in some degree been perpetuated to succeeding generations, and the character of Constantine is considered, even in the present age, as an object either of satire or of panegyric. By the impartial union of those defects which are confessed by his warmest admirers, and of those virtues which are acknowledged by his most implacable enemies, we might hope to delineate a just portrait of that extraordinary man which the truth and candor of history should adopt without a blush. But it would soon appear, that the vain attempt to blend such discordant colors and to reconcile such inconsistent qualities must produce a figure monstrous rather than human, unless it is viewed in its proper and distinct lights, by a careful separation of the different periods of the reign of Constantine.

The person as well as the mind of Constantine had been enriched by nature with her choicest endowments. His stature was lofty, his countenance majestic, his deportment graceful, his strength and activity were displayed in every manly exercise, and from his earliest youth to a very advanced season of life he preserved the vigor of his constitution by a strict adherence to the domestic virtues of chastity and temperance. He delighted in the social intercourse of familiar conversation; and though he might sometimes indulge his disposition to raillery with less reserve than was required by the severe dignity of his station, the courtesy and liberality of his manners gained the hearts of all who approached him. The sincerity of his friendship has been suspected; yet he showed on some occasions that he was not incapable of a warm and lasting attachment. The disadvantage of an illiterate education had not prevented him from forming a just estimate of the value of learning; and the arts and sciences derived some encouragement from the munificent protection of Constantine. In the dispatch of business, his diligence was indefatigable; and the active powers of his mind were almost continually exercised in reading, writing, or meditating, in giving audience to ambassadors, and in examining the complaints of his subjects. Even those who censured the propriety of his measures were compelled to acknowledge that he possessed magnanimity to conceive and patience to execute the most arduous designs, without being checked either by the prejudices of education or by the clamors of the multitude. In the field he infused his own intrepid spirit into the troops, whom he conducted with the talents of a consummate general; and to his abilities, rather than to his fortune, we may ascribe the signal victories which he obtained over the foreign and domestic foes of the republic. He loved glory as the reward, perhaps as the motive, of his labors. The boundless ambition which, from the moment of his accepting the purple at York, appears as the ruling passion of his soul, may be justified by the dangers of his own situation, by the character of his rivals, by the consciousness of superior merit, and by the prospect that his success would enable him to restore peace and order to the distracted empire. In his civil wars against Maxentius and Licinius he had engaged on his side the inclinations of the people, who compared the undissembled vices of those tyrants with the spirit of wisdom and justice which seemed to direct the general tenor of the administration of Constantine.

Had Constantine fallen on the banks of the Tiber, or even in the plains of Hadrianople, such is the character which, with a few exceptions, he might have transmitted to posterity. But the conclusion of his reign (according to the moderate and indeed tender sentence of a writer of the same age) degraded him from the rank which he had acquired among the most deserving of the Roman princes. In the life of Augustus we behold the tyrant of the republic converted, almost by imperceptible degrees, into the father of his country and of human kind. In that of Constantine we may contemplate a hero who had so long inspired his subjects with love and his enemies with terror, degenerating into a cruel and dissolute monarch, corrupted by his fortune or raised by conquest above the necessity of dissimulation. The general peace which he maintained during the last fourteen years of his reign was a period of apparent splendor rather than of real prosperity; and the old age of Constantine was disgraced by the opposite yet reconcilable vices of rapaciousness and prodigality. The accumulated treasures found in the palaces of Maxentius and Licinius were lavishly consumed; the various innovations introduced by the conqueror were attended with an increasing expense; the cost of his buildings, his court, and his festivals required an immediate and plentiful supply; and the oppression of the people was the only fund which could support the magnificence of the sovereign. His unworthy favorites, enriched by the boundless liberality of their master, usurped with impunity the privilege of rapine and corruption. A secret but universal decay was felt in every part of the public administration; and the Emperor himself, though he still retained the obedience, gradually lost the esteem of his subjects. The dress and manners which towards the decline of life he chose to affect, served only to degrade him in the eyes of mankind. The Asiatic pomp which had been adopted by the pride of Diocletian assumed an air of softness and effeminacy in the person of Constantine. He is represented with false hair of various colors, laboriously arranged by the skillful artists of the times; a diadem of a new and more expensive fashion; a profusion of gems and pearls, of collars and bracelets, and a variegated flowing robe of silk, most curiously embroidered with flowers of gold. In such apparel, scarcely to be excused by the youth and folly of Elagabulus, we are at a loss to discover the wisdom of an aged monarch and the simplicity of a Roman veteran. A mind thus relaxed by prosperity and indulgence was incapable of rising to that magnanimity which disdains suspicion and dares to forgive. The deaths of Maximian and Licinius may perhaps be justified by the maxims of policy as they are taught in the schools of tyrants; but an impartial narrative of the executions, or rather murders, which sullied the declining age of Constantine, will suggest to our most candid thoughts the idea of a prince who could sacrifice without reluctance the laws of justice and the feelings of nature, to the dictates either of his passions or of his interest.

The same fortune which so invariably followed the standard of Constantine seemed to secure the hopes and comforts of his domestic life. Those among his predecessors who had enjoyed the longest and most prosperous reigns, Augustus, Trajan, and Diocletian, had been disappointed of posterity; and the frequent revolutions had never allowed sufficient time for any imperial family to grow up and multiply under the shade of the purple. But the royalty of the Flavian line, which had been first ennobled by the Gothic Claudius, descended through several generations; and Constantine himself derived from his royal father the hereditary honors which he transmitted to his children. The Emperor had been twice married. Minervina, the obscure but lawful object of his youthful attachment, had left him only one son, who was called Crispus. By Fausta, the daughter of Maximian, he had three daughters, and three sons known by the kindred names of Constantine, Constantius, and Constans. The unambitious brothers of the great Constantine, Julius Constantius, Dalmatius, and Hannibalianus, were permitted to enjoy the most honorable rank and the most affluent fortune that could be consistent with a private station. The youngest of the three lived without a name and died without posterity. His two elder brothers obtained in marriage the daughters of wealthy senators, and propagated new branches of the imperial race. Gallus and Julian afterwards became the most illustrious of the children of Julius

Constantius the *Patrician*. The two sons of Dalmatius, who had been decorated with the vain title of *censor*, were named Dalmatius and Hannibalianus. The two sisters of the great Constantine, Anastasia and Eutropia, were bestowed on Optatus and Nepotianus, two senators of noble birth and of consular dignity. His third sister, Constantia, was distinguished by her pre-eminence of greatness and of misery. She remained the widow of the vanquished Licinius; and it was by her entreaties that an innocent boy, the offspring of their marriage, preserved for some time his life, the title of Cæsar, and a precarious hope of the succession. Besides the females and the allies of the Flavian house, ten or twelve males to whom the language of modern courts would apply the title of princes of the blood, seemed, according to the order of their birth, to be destined either to inherit or to support the throne of Constantine. But in less than thirty years this numerous and increasing family was reduced to the persons of Constantius and Julian, who alone had survived a series of crimes and calamities such as the tragic poets have deplored in the devoted lines of Pelops and of Cadmus.

DEATH OF JULIAN

While Julian struggled with the almost insuperable difficulties of his situation, the silent hours of the night were still devoted to study and contemplation. Whenever he closed his eyes in short and interrupted slumbers, his mind was agitated with painful anxiety; nor can it be thought surprising that the Genius of the Empire should once more appear before him, covering with a funeral veil his head and his horn of abundance, and slowly retiring from the imperial tent. The monarch started from his couch, and stepping forth to refresh his wearied spirits with the coolness of the midnight air, he beheld a fiery meteor which shot athwart the sky and suddenly vanished. Julian was convinced that he had seen the menacing countenance of the god of war; the council which he summoned of Tuscan Haruspices unanimously pronounced that he should abstain from action; but on this occasion necessity and reason were more prevalent than superstition, and the trumpets sounded at the break of day. The army marched through a hilly country, and the hills had been secretly occupied by the Persians.

Julian led the van with the skill and attention of a consummate general; he was alarmed by the intelligence that his rear was suddenly attacked. The heat of the weather had tempted him to lay aside his cuirass; but he snatched a shield from one of his attendants and hastened with a sufficient reinforcement to the relief of the rear guard. A similar danger recalled the intrepid prince to the defense of the front; and as he galloped between the columns, the centre of the left was attacked and almost overpowered by a furious charge of the Persian cavalry and elephants. This huge body was soon defeated by the well-timed evolution of the light infantry, who aimed their weapons, with dexterity and effect, against the backs of the horsemen and the legs of the elephants. The Barbarians fled; and Julian, who was foremost in every danger, animated the pursuit with his voice and gestures. His trembling guards, scattered and oppressed by the disorderly throng of friends and enemies, reminded their fearless sovereign that he was without armor, and conjured him to decline the fall of the impending ruin. As they exclaimed, a cloud of darts and arrows was discharged from the flying squadrons; and a javelin, after razing the skin of his arm, transpierced the ribs and fixed in the inferior part of the liver. Julian attempted to draw the deadly weapon from his side, but his fingers were cut by the sharpness of the steel, and he fell senseless from his horse. His guards flew to his relief, and the wounded Emperor was gently raised from the ground and conveyed out of the tumult of the battle into an adjacent tent. The report of the melancholy event passed from rank to rank; but the grief of the Romans inspired them with invincible valor and the desire of revenge. The bloody and obstinate conflict was maintained by the two armies till they were separated by the total darkness of the night. The Persians derived some honor from the advantage which they obtained against the left wing, where Anatolius, master of the offices, was slain, and the præfect Sallust very narrowly escaped. But the event of the day was adverse to the Barbarians. They abandoned the field, their two generals Meranes and Nohordates, fifty nobles or satraps, and a multitude of their bravest soldiers; and the success of the Romans, if Julian had survived, might have been improved into a decisive and useful victory.

The first words that Julian uttered after his recovery from the fainting fit into which he had been thrown by loss of blood, were expressive of his martial spirit. He called for his horse and arms, and was impatient to rush into the battle. His remaining strength was exhausted by the painful effort, and the surgeons who examined his wound discovered the symptoms of approaching death. He employed the awful moments with the firm temper of a hero and a sage; the philosophers who had accompanied him in this fatal expedition compared the tent of Julian with the prison of Socrates; and the spectators whom duty or friendship or curiosity had assembled round his couch listened with respectful grief to the funeral oration of their dying emperor: — "Friends and fellow soldiers, the seasonable period of my departure is now arrived, and I discharge, with the cheerfulness of a ready debtor, the demands of nature. I have learned from philosophy how much the soul is more excellent than the body; and that the separation of the nobler substance should be the subject of joy rather than of affliction. I have learned from religion that an earthly death has often been the reward of piety; and I accept, as a favor of the gods, the mortal stroke that secures me from the danger of disgracing a character which has hitherto been supported by virtue and fortitude. I die without remorse, as I have lived without guilt. I am pleased to reflect on the innocence of my private life; and I can affirm with confidence that the supreme authority, that emanation of the Divine power, has been preserved in my hands pure and immaculate. Detesting the corrupt and destructive maxims of despotism, I have considered the happiness of the people as the end of government. Submitting my actions to the laws of prudence, of justice, and of moderation, I have trusted the event to the care of Providence. Peace was the object of my counsels as long as peace was consistent with the public welfare; but when the imperious voice of my country summoned me to arms, I exposed my person to the dangers of war with the clear foreknowledge (which I had acquired from the art of divination) that I was destined to fall by the sword. I now offer my tribute of gratitude to the Eternal Being, who has not suffered me to perish by the cruelty of a tyrant, by the secret dagger of conspiracy, or by the slow tortures of lingering disease. He has given me, in the midst of an honorable career, a splendid and glorious departure from this world; and I hold it equally absurd, equally base, to solicit or to decline the stroke of fate. Thus much I have attempted to say; but my strength fails me, and I feel the approach of death.

I shall cautiously refrain from any word that may tend to influence your suffrages in the election of an emperor. My choice might be imprudent or injudicious; and if it should not be ratified by the consent of the army, it might be fatal to the person whom I should recommend. I shall only, as a good citizen, express my hopes that the Romans may be blessed with the government of a virtuous sovereign." After this discourse, which Julian pronounced in a firm and gentle tone of voice, he distributed by a military testament the remains of his private fortune; and making some inquiry why Anatolius was not present, he understood from the answer of Sallust that Anatolius was killed, and bewailed with amiable inconsistency the loss of his friend. At the same time he reproved the immoderate grief of the spectators, and conjured them not to disgrace by unmanly tears the fate of a prince who in a few moments would be united with heaven and with the stars. The spectators were silent; and Julian entered into a metaphysical argument with the philosophers Priscus and Maximus on the nature of the soul. The efforts which he made, of mind as well as body, most probably hastened his death. His wound began to bleed with fresh violence; his respiration was embarrassed by the swelling of the veins; he called for a draught of cold water, and as soon as he had drunk it expired without pain, about the hour of midnight. Such was the end of that extraordinary man, in the thirty-second year of his age, after a reign of one year and about eight months from the death of Constantius. In his last moments he displayed, perhaps with some ostentation, the love of virtue and of fame which had been the ruling passions of his life.

THE FALL OF ROME

At the hour of midnight the Salarian gate was silently opened, and the inhabitants were awakened by the tremendous sound of the Gothic trumpet. Eleven hundred and sixty-three years after the foundation of Rome, the imperial city which had subdued and civilized so considerable a part of mankind was delivered to the licentious fury of the tribes of Germany and Scythia.

The proclamation of Alaric, when he forced his entrance into a vanquished city, discovered however some regard for the laws of humanity and religion. He encouraged his troops boldly to seize the rewards of valor, and to enrich themselves with the spoils of a wealthy and effeminate people; but he exhorted them at the same time to spare the lives of the unresisting citizens, and to respect the churches of the apostles St. Peter and St. Paul as holy and inviolable sanctuaries. Amidst the horrors of a nocturnal tumult, several of the Christian Goths displayed the fervor of a recent conversion; and some instances of their uncommon piety and moderation are related, and perhaps adorned, by the zeal of ecclesiastical writers. While the Barbarians roamed through the city in quest of prey, the humble dwelling of an aged virgin who had devoted her life to the service of the altar was forced open by one of the powerful Goths. He immediately demanded, though in civil language, all the gold and silver in her possession; and was astonished at the readiness with which she conducted him to a splendid hoard of massy plate of the richest materials and the most curious workmanship. The Barbarian viewed with wonder and delight this valuable acquisition, till he was interrupted by a serious admonition addressed to him in the following words: « These,» said she, « are the consecrated vessels belonging to St. Peter; if you presume to touch them, the sacrilegious deed will remain on your conscience. For my part, I dare not keep what I am unable to defend.» The Gothic captain, struck with reverential awe, dispatched a messenger to inform the King of the treasure which he had discovered, and received a peremptory order from Alaric that all the consecrated plate and ornaments should be transported, without damage or delay, to the church of the Apostle. From the extremity, perhaps, of the Quirinal hill, to the distant quarter of the Vatican, a numerous detachment of Goths, marching in order of battle through the principal streets, protected with glittering arms the long train of their devout companions, who bore aloft on their heads the sacred vessels of gold and silver; and the martial shouts of the Barbarians were mingled with the sound of religious psalmody. From all the adjacent houses a crowd of Christians hastened to join this edifying procession; and a multitude of fugitives, without distinction of age, or rank, or even of sect, had the good fortune to escape to the secure and hospitable sanctuary of the Vatican. The learned work ‹Concerning the City of God› was professedly composed by St. Augustine to justify the ways of Providence in the destruction of the Roman greatness. He celebrates with peculiar satisfaction this memorable triumph of Christ, and insults his adversaries by challenging them to produce some similar example of a town taken by storm, in which the fabulous gods of antiquity had been able to protect either themselves or their deluded votaries.

In the sack of Rome, some rare and extraordinary examples of Barbarian virtue have been deservedly applauded. But the holy precincts of the Vatican and the Apostolic churches could receive a very small proportion of the Roman people; many thousand warriors, more especially of the Huns who served under the standard of Alaric, were strangers to the name, or at least to the faith, of Christ; and we may suspect without any breach of charity or candor that in the hour of savage license, when every passion was inflamed and every restraint was removed, the precepts of the gospel seldom influenced the behavior of the Gothic Christians. The writers the best disposed to exaggerate their clemency have freely confessed that a cruel slaughter was made of the Romans, and that the streets of the city were filled with dead bodies, which remained without burial during the general consternation. The despair of the citizens was sometimes converted into fury; and whenever the Barbarians were provoked by opposition, they extended the promiscuous massacre to the feeble, the innocent, and the helpless. The private revenge of forty thousand slaves was exercised without pity or remorse; and the ignominious lashes which they had formerly received were washed away in the blood of the guilty or obnoxious families. The matrons and virgins of Rome were exposed to injuries more dreadful, in the apprehension of chastity, than death itself. . . .

The want of youth, or beauty, or chastity protected the greatest part of the Roman women from the danger of a rape. But avarice is an insatiate and universal passion, since the enjoyment of almost every object that can afford pleasure to the different tastes and tempers of mankind may be procured by the possession of wealth. In the pillage of Rome, a just preference was given to gold and jewels, which contain the greatest value in the smallest compass and weight; but after these portable riches had been removed by the more diligent robbers, the palaces of Rome were rudely stripped of their splendid and costly furniture. The sideboards of massy plate, and the variegated wardrobes of silk and purple, were irregularly piled in the wagons that always followed the march of a Gothic army. The most exquisite works of art were roughly handled or wantonly destroyed; many a statue was melted for the sake of the precious materials; and many a vase, in the division of the spoil, was shivered into fragments by the stroke of a battle-axe. The acquisition of riches served only to stimulate the avarice of the rapacious Barbarians, who proceeded by threats, by blows, and by tortures, to force from their prisoners the confession of hidden treasure. Visible splendor and expense were alleged as the proof of a plentiful fortune; the appearance of poverty was imputed to a parsimonious disposition; and the obstinacy of some misers, who endured the most cruel torments before they would discover the secret object of their affection, was fatal to many unhappy wretches, who expired under the lash for refusing to reveal their imaginary treasures. The edifices of Rome, though the damage has been much exaggerated, received some injury from the violence of the Goths. At their entrance through the Salarian gate, they fired the adjacent houses to guide their march and to distract the attention of the citizens; the flames, which encountered no obstacle in the disorder of the night, consumed many private and public buildings; and the ruins of the palace of Sallust remained, in the age of Justinian, a stately monument of the Gothic conflagration. Yet a contemporary historian has observed that fire could scarcely consume the enormous beams of solid brass, and that the strength of man was insufficient to subvert the foundations of ancient structures. Some truth may possibly be concealed in his devout assertion that the wrath of Heaven supplied the imperfections of hostile rage, and that the proud Forum of Rome, decorated with the statues of so many gods and heroes, was leveled in the dust by the stroke of lightning. . . .

It was not easy to compute the multitudes who, from an honorable station and a prosperous future, were suddenly reduced to the miserable condition of captives and exiles. . . . The nations who invaded the Roman empire had driven before them into Italy whole troops of hungry and affrighted provincials, less apprehensive of servitude than of famine. The calamities of Rome and Italy dispersed the inhabitants to the most lonely, the most secure, the most distant places of refuge. . . . The Italian fugitives were dispersed through the provinces, along the coast of Egypt and Asia, as far as Constantinople and Jerusalem;

and the village of Bethlem, the solitary residence of St. Jerom and his female converts, was crowded with illustrious beggars of either sex and every age, who excited the public compassion by the remembrance of their past fortune. This awful catastrophe of Rome filled the astonished empire with grief and terror. So interesting a contrast of greatness and ruin disposed the fond credulity of the people to deplore, and even to exaggerate, the afflictions of the queen of cities. The clergy, who applied to recent events the lofty metaphors of Oriental prophecy, were sometimes tempted to confound the destruction of the capital and the dissolution of the globe.

SILK

I NEED not explain that *silk* is originally spun from the bowels of a caterpillar, and that it composes the golden tomb from whence a worm emerges in the form of a butterfly. Till the reign of Justinian, the silkworms who feed on the leaves of the white mulberry-tree were confined to China; those of the pine, the oak, and the ash were common in the forests both of Asia and Europe: but as their education is more difficult, and their produce more uncertain, they were generally neglected, except in the little island of Ceos, near the coast of Attica. A thin gauze was procured from their webs, and this Cean manufacture, the invention of a woman, for female use, was long admired both in the East and at Rome. Whatever suspicions may be raised by the garments of the Medes and Assyrians, Virgil is the most ancient writer who expressly mentions the soft wool which was combed from the trees of the Seres or Chinese; and this natural error, less marvelous than the truth, was slowly corrected by the knowledge of a valuable insect, the first artificer of the luxury of nations. That rare and elegant luxury was censured, in the reign of Tiberius, by the gravest of the Romans; and Pliny, in affected though forcible language, has condemned the thirst of gain which explores the last confines of the earth for the pernicious purpose of exposing to the public eye naked draperies and transparent matrons. A dress which showed the turn of the limbs, the color of the skin, might gratify vanity or provoke desire; the silks which had been closely woven in China were sometimes unraveled by the Phœnician women, and the precious materials were multiplied by a looser texture and the intermixture of linen threads. Two hundred years after the age of Pliny the use of pure or even of mixed silks was confined to the female sex, till the opulent citizens of Rome and the provinces were insensibly familiarized with the example of Elagabalus, the first who, by this effeminate habit, had sullied the dignity of an emperor and a man. Aurelian complained that a pound of silk was sold at Rome for twelve ounces of gold; but the supply increased with the demand, and the price diminished with the supply. If accident or monopoly sometimes raised the value even above the standard of Aurelian, the manufacturers of Tyre and Berytus were sometimes compelled, by the operation of the same causes, to content themselves with a ninth part of that extravagant rate. A law was thought necessary to discriminate the dress of comedians from that of senators; and of the silk exported from its native country the far greater part was consumed by the subjects of Justinian. They were still more intimately acquainted with a shell-fish of the Mediterranean, surnamed the silkworm of the sea: the fine wool or hair by which the mother-of-pearl affixes itself to the rock is now manufactured for curiosity rather than use; and a robe obtained from the same singular materials was the gift of the Roman Emperor to the satraps of Armenia.

A valuable merchandise of small bulk is capable of defraying the expense of land carriage; and the caravans traversed the whole latitude of Asia in two hundred and forty-three days from the Chinese Ocean to the sea-coast of Syria. Silk was immediately delivered to the Romans by the Persian merchants who frequented the fairs of Armenia and Nisibis; but this trade, which in the intervals of truce was oppressed by avarice and jealousy, was totally interrupted by the long wars of the rival monarchies. The great king might proudly number Sogdiana, and even *Serica*, among the provinces of his empire: but his real dominion was bounded by the Oxus; and his useful intercourse with the Sogdoites beyond the river depended on the pleasure of their conquerors the white Huns, and the Turks, who successively reigned over that industrious people. Yet the most savage dominion has not extirpated the seeds of agriculture and commerce, in a region which is celebrated as one of the four gardens of Asia; the cities of Samarcand and Bochara are advantageously seated for the exchange of its various productions; and their merchants purchased from the Chinese the raw or manufactured silk which they transported into Persia for the use of the Roman Empire. In the vain capital of China, the Sogdian caravans were entertained as the suppliant embassies of tributary kingdoms; and if they returned in safety, the bold adventure was rewarded with exorbitant gain. But the difficult and perilous march from Samarcand to the first town of Shensi could not be performed in less than sixty, eighty, or one hundred days: as soon as they had passed the Jaxartes they entered the desert; and the wandering hordes, unless they are restrained by armies and garrisons, have always considered the citizen and the traveler as the objects of lawful rapine. To escape the Tartar robbers and the tyrants of Persia, the silk caravans explored a more southern road; they traversed the mountains of Thibet, descended the streams of the Ganges or the Indus, and patiently expected, in the ports of Guzerat and Malabar, the annual fleets of the West. But the dangers of the desert were found less intolerable than toil, hunger, and the loss of time; the attempt was seldom renewed, and the only European who has passed that unfrequented way applauds his own diligence, that in nine months after his departure from Pekin, he reached the mouth of the Indus. The ocean, however, was open to the free communication of mankind. From the great river to the tropic of Cancer, the provinces of China were subdued and civilized by the emperors of the North; they were filled about the time of the Christian era with cities and men, mulberry-trees and their precious inhabitants; and if the Chinese, with the knowledge of the compass, had possessed the genius of the Greeks or Phœnicians, they might have spread their discoveries over the southern hemisphere. I am not qualified to examine, and I am not disposed to believe, their distant voyages to the Persian Gulf or the Cape of Good Hope; but their ancestors might equal the labors and success of the present race, and the sphere of their navigation might extend from the Isles of Japan to the Straits of Malacca,—the pillars, if we may apply that name, of an Oriental Hercules. Without losing sight of land, they might sail along the coast to the extreme promontory of Achin, which is annually visited by ten or twelve ships laden with the productions, the manufactures, and even the artificers of China; the Island of Sumatra and the opposite peninsula are faintly delineated as the regions of gold and silver; and the trading cities named in the geography of

Ptolemy may indicate that this wealth was not solely derived from the mines. The direct interval between Sumatra and Ceylon is about three hundred leagues: the Chinese and Indian navigators were conducted by the flight of birds and periodical winds; and the ocean might be securely traversed in square-built ships, which instead of iron were sewed together with the strong thread of the cocoanut. Ceylon, Serendib, or Taprobana, was divided between two hostile princes; one of whom possessed the mountains, the elephants, and the luminous carbuncle, and the other enjoyed the more solid riches of domestic industry, foreign trade, and the capacious harbor of Trinquemale, which received and dismissed the fleets of the East and West. In this hospitable isle, at an equal distance (as it was computed) from their respective countries, the silk merchants of China, who had collected in their voyages aloes, cloves, nutmeg, and sandal-wood, maintained a free and beneficial commerce with the inhabitants of the Persian Gulf. The subjects of the great king exalted, without a rival, his power and magnificence; and the Roman, who confounded their vanity by comparing his paltry coin with a gold medal of the Emperor Anastasius, had sailed to Ceylon in an Æthiopian ship as a simple passenger.

As silk became of indispensable use, the Emperor Justinian saw with concern that the Persians had occupied by land and sea the monopoly of this important supply, and that the wealth of his subjects was continually drained by a nation of enemies and idolaters. An active government would have restored the trade of Egypt and the navigation of the Red Sea, which had decayed with the prosperity of the empire; and the Roman vessels might have sailed, for the purchase of silk, to the ports of Ceylon, of Malacca, or even of China. Justinian embraced a more humble expedient, and solicited the aid of his Christian allies, the Æthiopians of Abyssinia, who had recently acquired the arts of navigation, the spirit of trade, and the seaport of Adulis, still decorated with the trophies of a Grecian conqueror. Along the African coast they penetrated to the Equator in search of gold, emeralds, and aromatics; but they wisely declined an unequal competition, in which they must be always prevented by the vicinity of the Persians to the markets of India; and the Emperor submitted to the disappointment till his wishes were gratified by an unexpected event. The gospel had been preached to the Indians; a bishop already governed the Christians of St. Thomas on the pepper coast of Malabar; a church was planted in Ceylon, and the missionaries pursued the footsteps of commerce to the extremities of Asia. Two Persian monks had long resided in China, perhaps in the royal city of Nankin, the seat of a monarch addicted to foreign superstitions, and who actually received an embassy from the Isle of Ceylon. Amidst their pious occupations they viewed with a curious eye the common dress of the Chinese, the manufactures of silk, and the myriads of silkworms, whose education (either on trees or in houses) had once been considered as the labor of queens. They soon discovered that it was impracticable to transport the short-lived insect, but that in the eggs a numerous progeny might be preserved and multiplied in a distant climate. Religion or interest had more power over the Persian monks than the love of their country: after a long journey they arrived at Constantinople, imparted their project to the Emperor, and were liberally encouraged by the gifts and promises of Justinian. To the historians of that prince, a campaign at the foot of Mount Caucasus has seemed more deserving of a minute relation than the labors of these missionaries of commerce, who again entered China, deceived a jealous people by concealing the eggs of the silkworm in a hollow cane, and returned in triumph with the spoils of the East. Under their direction the eggs were hatched at the proper season by the artificial heat of dung; the worms were fed with mulberry leaves; they lived and labored in a foreign climate; a sufficient number of butterflies were saved to propagate the race, and trees were planted to supply the nourishment of the rising generations. Experience and reflection corrected the errors of a new attempt, and the Sogdoite ambassadors acknowledged in the succeeding reign that the Romans were not inferior to the natives of China in the education of the insects and the manufactures of silk, in which both China and Constantinople have been surpassed by the industry of modern Europe. I am not insensible of the benefits of elegant luxury; yet I reflect with some pain that if the importers of silk had introduced the art of printing, already practiced by the Chinese, the comedies of Menander and the entire decades of Livy would have been perpetuated in the editions of the sixth century.

MAHOMET'S DEATH AND CHARACTER

Till the age of sixty-three years, the strength of Mahomet was equal to the temporal and spiritual fatigues of his mission. His epileptic fits, an absurd calumny of the Greeks, would be an object of pity rather than abhorrence; but he seriously believed that he was poisoned at Chaibar by the revenge of a Jewish female. During four years the health of the prophet declined; his infirmities increased; but his mortal disease was a fever of fourteen days which deprived him by intervals of the use of reason. As soon as he was conscious of his danger, he edified his brethren by the humility of his virtue or penitence. «If there be any man,» said the apostle from the pulpit, «whom I have unjustly scourged, I submit my own back to the lash of retaliation. Have I aspersed the reputation of a Mussulman? let him proclaim *my* thoughts in the face of the congregation. Has any one been despoiled of his goods? the little that I possess shall compensate the principal and the interest of the debt.» «Yes,» replied a voice from the crowd, «I am entitled to three drams of silver.» Mahomet heard the complaint, satisfied the demand, and thanked his creditor for accusing him in this world rather than at the day of judgment. He beheld with temperate firmness the approach of death; enfranchised his slaves (seventeen men, as they are named, and eleven women), minutely directed the order of his funeral, and moderated the lamentations of his weeping friends, on whom he bestowed the benediction of peace. Till the third day before his death, he regularly performed the function of public prayer: the choice of Abubeker to supply his place appeared to mark that ancient and faithful friend as his successor in the sacerdotal and regal office; but he prudently declined the risk and envy of a more explicit nomination. At a moment when his faculties were visibly impaired, he called for pen and ink to write, or more properly, to dictate, a Divine book, the sum and accomplishment of all his revelations: a dispute arose in the chamber whether he should be allowed to supersede the authority of the Koran, and the prophet was forced to reprove the indecent vehemence of his disciples. If the slightest credit may be afforded to the traditions of his wives and companions, he maintained, in the bosom of his family, and to the last moments of his life, the dignity of an apostle and the faith of an enthusiast; described the visits of Gabriel, who bade an everlasting farewell to the earth, and expressed his lively confidence not only of the mercy but of the favor of the Supreme Being. In a familiar discourse he had mentioned his special prerogative, that the angel of death was not allowed to take his soul till he had respectfully asked the permission of the prophet. The request was granted; and Mahomet immediately fell into the agony of his dissolution: his head was reclined on the lap of Ayesha, the best beloved of all his wives; he fainted with the violence of pain; recovering his spirits, he raised his eyes towards the roof of the house, and with a steady look, though a faltering voice, uttered the last broken though articulate words:—"O God! . . . pardon my sins . . . Yes . . . I come . . . among my fellow-citizens on high;" and thus peaceably expired on a carpet spread upon the floor. An expedition for the conquest of Syria was stopped by this mournful event: the army halted at the gates of Medina, the chiefs were assembled round their dying master. The city, more especially the house, of the prophet, was a scene of clamorous sorrow or silent despair: fanaticism alone could suggest a ray of hope and consolation. "How can he be dead—our witness, our intercessor, our mediator with God? By God, he is not dead: like Moses and Jesus, he is wrapped in a holy trance, and speedily will he return to his faithful people." The evidence of sense was disregarded, and Omar, unsheathing his cimeter, threatened to strike off the heads of the infidels who should dare to affirm that the prophet was no more. The tumult was appeased by the weight and moderation of Abubeker. "Is it Mahomet," said he to Omar and the multitude, "or the God of Mahomet, whom you worship? The God of Mahomet liveth forever; but the apostle was a mortal like ourselves, and according to his own prediction, he has experienced the common fate of mortality." He was piously interred by the hands of his nearest kinsman, on the same spot on which he expired. Medina has been sanctified by the death and burial of Mahomet, and the innumerable pilgrims of Mecca often turn aside from the way, to bow in voluntary devotion before the simple tomb of the prophet.

At the conclusion of the life of Mahomet it may perhaps be expected that I should balance his faults and virtues, that I should decide whether the title of enthusiast or impostor more properly belongs to that extraordinary man. Had I been intimately conversant with the son of Abdallah, the task would still be difficult and the success uncertain: at the distance of twelve centuries, I darkly contemplate his shade through a cloud of religious incense; and could I truly delineate the portrait of an hour, the fleeting resemblance would not equally apply to the solitary of Mount Hera, to the preacher of Mecca, and to the conqueror of Arabia. The author of a mighty revolution appears to have been endowed with a pious and contemplative disposition; so soon as marriage had raised him above the pressure of want, he avoided the paths of ambition and avarice; and till the age of forty he lived with innocence, and would have died without a name. The unity of God is an idea most congenial to nature and reason; and a slight conversation with the Jews and Christians would teach him to despise and detest the idolatry of Mecca. It was the duty of a man and a citizen to impart the doctrine of salvation, to rescue his country from the dominion of sin and error. The energy of a mind incessantly bent on the same object would convert a general obligation into a particular call; the warm suggestions of the understanding or the fancy would be felt as the inspirations of Heaven; the labor of thought would expire in rapture and vision; and the inward sensation, the invisible monitor, would be described with the form and attributes of an angel of God. From enthusiasm to imposture the step is perilous and slippery: the dæmon of Socrates affords a memorable instance how a wise man may deceive himself, how a good man may deceive others, how the conscience may slumber in a mixed and middle state between self-illusion and voluntary fraud. Charity may believe that the original motives of Mahomet were those of pure and genuine benevolence; but a human missionary is incapable of cherishing the obstinate unbelievers who reject his claims, despise his arguments, and persecute his life; he might forgive his personal adversaries, he may lawfully hate the enemies of God; the stern passions of pride and revenge were kindled in the bosom of Mahomet, and he sighed, like the prophet of Nineveh, for the destruction of the rebels whom he had condemned. The injustice of Mecca and the choice of Medina transformed the citizen into a prince, the humble preacher into the leader of armies; but his sword was consecrated by the example of the saints, and the same God who afflicts a sinful world with pestilence and earthquakes might inspire for their conversion or chastisement the valor of his servants. In the exercise of political government, he was compelled to abate of the stern rigor of fanaticism, to comply in some measure with the prejudices and passions of his followers, and to employ even the vices of mankind as the instruments of their salvation. The use of fraud and perfidy, of cruelty and injustice, were often subservient to the propagation of the faith; and Mahomet commanded or approved the assassination of the Jews and idolaters who had escaped from the field of battle. By the repetition of such acts the character of Mahomet must have been gradually stained; and the influence of such pernicious habits would be poorly compensated by the practice of the personal and social virtues which are necessary to maintain the reputation of a prophet among his sectaries and friends. Of his last years, ambition was the ruling passion; and a politician will suspect that he secretly smiled (the victorious impostor!) at the enthusiasm of his youth and the credulity of his proselytes. A philosopher will observe that *their* credulity and *his* success would tend more strongly to fortify the assurance of his Divine mission; that his interest and religion were inseparately connected; and that his conscience would be soothed by the persuasion that he alone was absolved by the Deity from the obligation of positive and moral laws. If he retained any vestige of his native innocence, the sins of Mahomet may be allowed as an evidence of his sincerity. In the support of truth, the arts of fraud and fiction may be deemed less criminal; and he would have started at the foulness of the means, had he not been satisfied of the importance and justice of the end. Even in a conqueror or a priest, I can surprise a word or action of unaffected humanity; and the decree of Mahomet that in the sale of captives the mothers should never be separated from their children, may suspend or moderate the censure of the historian.

The good sense of Mahomet despised the pomp of royalty; the apostle of God submitted to the menial offices of the family; he kindled the fire, swept the floor, milked the ewes, and mended with his own hands his shoes and his woolen garment. Disdaining the penance and merit of a hermit, he observed, without effort or vanity, the abstemious diet of an Arab and a soldier. On solemn occasions he feasted his companions with rustic and hospitable plenty; but in his domestic life, many weeks would elapse without a fire being kindled on the hearth of the prophet. The interdiction of wine was confirmed by his example; his hunger was appeased with a sparing allowance of barley bread; he delighted in the taste of milk and honey, but his ordinary food consisted of dates and water. Perfumes and women were the two sensual enjoyments which his nature required and his religion did not forbid; and Mahomet affirmed that the fervor of his devotion was increased by these innocent pleasures. The heat of the climate inflames the blood of the Arabs, and their libidinous complexion has been noticed by the writers of antiquity. Their incontinence was regulated by the civil and religious laws of the Koran; their incestuous alliances were blamed; the boundless license of polygamy was reduced to four legitimate wives or concubines: their rights both of bed and of dowry were equitably determined; the freedom of divorce was discouraged; adultery was condemned as a capital offense; and fornication in either sex was punished with a hundred stripes. Such were the calm and rational precepts of the legislator, but in his private conduct Mahomet indulged the appetites of a man and abused the claims of a prophet. A special revelation dispensed him from the laws which he had imposed on his nation: the female sex, without reserve, was abandoned to his desires; and this singular prerogative excited the envy rather than the scandal, the veneration rather than the envy, of the devout Mussulmans. If we remember the seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines of the wise Solomon, we shall applaud the modesty of the Arabian, who espoused no more than seventeen or fifteen wives; eleven are enumerated, who occupied at Medina their separate apartments round the house of the apostle, and enjoyed in their turns the favor of his conjugal society. What is singular enough, they were all widows, excepting only Ayesha, the daughter of Abubeker. *She* was doubtless a virgin, since Mahomet consummated his nuptials (such is the premature ripeness of the climate) when she was only nine years of age. The youth, the beauty, the spirit of Ayesha gave her a superior ascendant; she was beloved and trusted by the prophet, and after his death the daughter of Abubeker was long revered as the mother of the faithful. Her behavior had been ambiguous and indiscreet; in a nocturnal march she was accidentally left behind, and in the morning Ayesha returned to the camp with a man. The temper of Mahomet was inclined to jealousy; but a Divine revelation assured him of her innocence: he chastised her accusers, and published a law of domestic peace, that no woman should be condemned unless four male witnesses had seen her in the act of adultery. In his adventures with Zeineb the wife of Zeid, and with Mary, an Egyptian captive, the amorous prophet forgot the interest of his reputation. At the house of Zeid, his freedman and adopted son, he beheld in a loose undress the beauty of Zeineb, and burst forth into an ejaculation of devotion and desire. The servile, or grateful, freedman understood the hint, and yielded without hesitation to the love of his benefactor. But as the filial relation had excited some doubt and scandal, the angel Gabriel descended from heaven to ratify the deed, to annul the adoption, and gently to reprove the apostle for distrusting the indulgence of his God. One of his wives, Hafna the daughter of Omar, surprised him on her own bed, in the embraces of his Egyptian captive: she promised secrecy and forgiveness; he swore that he would renounce the possession of Mary. Both parties forgot their engagements; and Gabriel again descended with a chapter of the Koran, to absolve him from his oath and to exhort him freely to enjoy his captives and concubines, without listening to the clamors of his wives. In a solitary retreat of thirty days, he labored, alone with Mary, to fulfill the commands of the angel. When his love and revenge were satiated, he summoned to his presence his eleven wives, reproached their disobedience and indiscretion, and threatened them with a sentence of divorce, both in this world and in the next; a dreadful sentence, since those who had ascended the bed of the prophet were forever excluded from the hope of a second marriage. Perhaps the incontinence of Mahomet may be palliated by the tradition of his natural or preternatural gifts; he united the manly virtue of thirty of the children of Adam; and the apostle might rival the thirteenth labor of the Grecian Hercules. A more serious and decent excuse may be drawn from his fidelity to Cadijah. During the twenty-four years of their marriage, her youthful husband abstained from the right of polygamy, and the pride or tenderness of the venerable matron was never insulted by the society of a rival. After her death he placed her in the rank of the four perfect women, with the sister of Moses, the mother of Jesus, and Fatima, the best beloved of his daughters. «Was she not old?» said Ayesha, with the insolence of a blooming beauty: «has not God given you a better in her place?» «No, by God,» said Mahomet, with an effusion of honest gratitude, «there never can be a better! She believed in me when men despised me; she relieved my wants when I was poor and persecuted by the world.»

THE ALEXANDRIAN LIBRARY

I SHOULD deceive the expectation of the reader if I passed in silence the fate of the Alexandrian library as it is described by the learned Abulpharagius. The spirit of Amrou was more curious and liberal than that of his brethren, and in his leisure hours the Arabian chief was pleased with the conversation of John, the last disciple of Ammonius, and who derived the surname of *Philoponus* from his laborious studies of grammar and philosophy. Emboldened by this familiar intercourse, Philoponus presumed to solicit a gift, inestimable in *his* opinion, contemptible in that of the Barbarians — the royal library, which alone among the spoils of Alexandria had not been appropriated by the visit and the seal of the conqueror. Amrou was inclined to gratify the wish of the grammarian, but his rigid integrity refused to alienate the minutest object without the consent of the caliph; and the well-known answer of Omar was inspired by the ignorance of a fanatic: «If these writings of the Greeks agree with the book of God, they are useless, and need not be preserved; if they disagree, they are pernicious, and ought to be destroyed.» The sentence was executed with blind obedience, the volumes of paper or parchment were distributed to the four thousand baths of the city; and such was their incredible multitude, that six months were barely sufficient for the consumption of this precious fuel. Since the Dynasties of Abulpharagius have been given to the world in a Latin version, the tale has been repeatedly transcribed; and every scholar, with pious indignation, has deplored the irreparable shipwreck of the learning, the arts, and the genius, of antiquity. For my own part, I am strongly tempted to deny both the fact and the consequences. The fact is indeed marvelous. «Read and wonder!» says the historian himself; and the solitary report of a stranger who wrote at the end of six hundred years on the confines of Media is overbalanced by the silence of two annalists of a more early date, both Christians, both natives of Egypt, and the most ancient of whom, the patriarch Eutychius, has amply described the conquest of Alexandria. The rigid sentence of Omar is repugnant to the sound and orthodox precept of the Mahometan casuists: they expressly declare that the religious books of the Jews and Christians which are acquired by the right of war should never be committed to the flames; and that the works of profane science, historians or poets, physicians or philosophers, may be lawfully applied to the use of the faithful. A more destructive zeal may perhaps be attributed to the first successors of Mahomet; yet in this instance, the conflagration would have speedily expired in the deficiency of materials. I shall not recapitulate the disasters of the Alexandrian library, the involuntary flame that was kindled by Cæsar in his own defense, or the mischievous bigotry of the Christians, who studied to destroy the monuments of idolatry. But if we gradually descend from the age of the Antonines to that of Theodosius, we shall learn from a chain of contemporary witnesses that the royal palace and the temple of Serapis no longer contained the four, or the seven, hundred thousand volumes which had been assembled by the curiosity and magnificence of the Ptolemies. Perhaps the church and seat of the patriarchs might be enriched with a repository of books; but if the ponderous mass of Arian and Monophysite controversy were indeed consumed in the public baths, a philosopher may allow, with a smile, that it was ultimately devoted to the benefit of mankind. I sincerely regret the more valuable libraries which have been involved in the ruin of the Roman Empire; but when I seriously compute the lapse of ages, the waste of ignorance, and the calamities of war, our treasures, rather than our losses, are the objects of my surprise. Many curious and interesting facts are buried in oblivion; the three great historians of Rome have been transmitted to our hands in a mutilated state, and we are deprived of many pleasing compositions of the lyric, iambic, and dramatic poetry of the Greeks. Yet we should gratefully remember that the mischances of time and accident have spared the classic works to which the suffrage of antiquity had adjudged the first place of genius and glory; the teachers of ancient knowledge who are still extant had perused and compared the writings of their predecessors; nor can it fairly be presumed that any important truth, any useful discovery in art or nature, has been snatched away from the curiosity of modern ages.

THE FINAL RUIN OF ROME

IN THE last days of Pope Eugenius the Fourth, two of his servants, the learned Poggius and a friend, ascended the Capitoline Hill, reposed themselves among the ruins of columns and temples, and viewed from that commanding spot the wide and various prospect of desolation. The place and the object gave ample scope for moralizing on the vicissitudes of fortune, which spares neither man nor the proudest of his works, which buries empires and cities in a common grave; and it was agreed that in proportion to her former greatness the fall of Rome was the more awful and deplorable. "Her primeval state, such as she might appear in a remote age, when Evander entertained the stranger of Troy, has been delineated by the fancy of Virgil. This Tarpeian Rock was then a savage and solitary thicket; in the time of the poet it was crowned with the golden roofs of a temple; the temple is overthrown, the gold has been pillaged, the wheel of fortune has accomplished her revolution, and the sacred ground is again disfigured with thorns and brambles. The hill of the Capitol, on which we sit, was formerly the head of the Roman Empire, the citadel of the earth, the terror of kings; illustrated by the footsteps of so many triumphs, enriched with the spoils and tributes of so many nations. This spectacle of the world, how is it fallen! how changed! how defaced! The path of victory is obliterated by vines, and the benches of the senators are concealed by a dunghill. Cast your eyes on the Palatine Hill, and seek among the shapeless and enormous fragments the marble theatre, the obelisks, the colossal statues, the porticos of Nero's palace; survey the other hills of the city,—the vacant space is interrupted only by ruins and gardens. The Forum of the Roman people, where they assembled to enact their laws and elect their magistrates, is now inclosed for the cultivation of pot-herbs, or thrown open for the reception of swine and buffaloes. The public and private edifices that were founded for eternity lie prostrate, naked, and broken, like the limbs of a mighty giant; and the ruin is the more visible, from the stupendous relics that have survived the injuries of time and fortune."

These relics are minutely described by Poggius, one of the first who raised his eyes from the monuments of legendary to those of classic superstition. 1. Besides a bridge, an arch, a sepulchre, and the pyramid of Cestius, he could discern, of the age of the republic, a double row of vaults in the salt office of the Capitol, which were inscribed with the name and munificence of Catulus. 2. Eleven temples were visible in some degree, from the perfect form of the Pantheon to the three arches and a marble column of the temple of Peace which Vespasian erected after the civil wars and the Jewish triumph. 3. Of the number which he rashly defines, of seven *thermæ*, or public baths, none were sufficiently entire to represent the use and distribution of the several parts; but those of Diocletian and Antoninus Caracalla still retained the titles of the founders and astonished the curious spectator who in observing their solidity and extent, the variety of marbles, the size and multitude of the columns, compared the labor and expense with the use and importance. Of the baths of Constantine, of Alexander, of Domitian, or rather of Titus, some vestige might yet be found. 4. The triumphal arches of Titus, Severus, and Constantine were entire, both the structure and the inscriptions; a falling fragment was honored with the name of Trajan; and two arches then extant in the Flaminian Way have been ascribed to the baser memory of Faustina and Gallienus. 5. After the wonder of the Coliseum, Poggius might have overlooked a small amphitheatre of brick, most probably for the use of the prætorian camp; the theatres of Marcellus and Pompey were occupied in a great measure by public and private buildings; and in the Circus, Agonalis and Maximus, little more than the situation and the form could be investigated. 6. The columns of Trajan and Antonine were still erect; but the Egyptian obelisks were broken or buried. A people of gods and heroes, the workmanship of art, was reduced to one equestrian figure of gilt brass and to five marble statues, of which the most conspicuous were the two horses of Phidias and Praxiteles. 7. The two mausoleums or sepulchres of Augustus and Hadrian could not totally be lost; but the former was only visible as a mound of earth, and the latter, the castle of St. Angelo, had acquired the name and appearance of a modern fortress. With the addition of some separate and nameless columns, such were the remains of the ancient city; for the marks of a more recent structure might be detected in the walls, which formed a circumference of ten miles, included three hundred and seventy-nine turrets, and opened into the country by thirteen gates.

This melancholy picture was drawn above nine hundred years after the fall of the Western Empire, and even of the Gothic kingdom of Italy. A long period of distress and anarchy, in which empire, and arts, and riches had migrated from the banks of the Tiber, was incapable of restoring or adorning the city; and as all that is human must retrograde if it do not advance, every successive age must have hastened the ruin of the works of antiquity. To measure the progress of decay, and to ascertain, at each era, the state of each edifice, would be an endless and a useless labor; and I shall content myself with two observations which will introduce a short inquiry into the general causes and effects. 1. Two hundred years before the eloquent complaint of Poggius, an anonymous writer composed a description of Rome. His ignorance may repeat the same objects under strange and fabulous names. Yet this barbarous topographer had eyes and ears; he could observe the visible remains; he could listen to the tradition of the people; and he distinctly enumerates seven theatres, eleven baths, twelve arches, and eighteen palaces, of which many had disappeared before the time of Poggius. It is apparent that many stately monuments of antiquity survived till a late period, and that the principles of destruction acted with vigorous and increasing energy in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. 2. The same reflection must be applied to the three last ages; and we should vainly seek the Septizonium of Severus, which is celebrated by Petrarch and the antiquarians of the sixteenth century. While the Roman edifices were still entire, the first blows, however weighty and impetuous, were resisted by the solidity of the mass and the harmony of the parts; but the slightest touch would precipitate the fragments of arches and columns that already nodded to their fall.

After a diligent inquiry, I can discern four principal causes of the ruin of Rome, which continued to operate in a period of more than a thousand years. I. The injuries of time and nature. II. The hostile attacks of the Barbarians and Christians. III. The use and abuse of the materials. And IV. The domestic quarrels of the Romans.

I. The art of man is able to construct monuments far more permanent than the narrow span of his own existence; yet these monuments, like himself, are perishable and frail; and in the boundless annals of time his life and his labors must equally be measured as a fleeting moment. Of a simple and solid edifice it is not easy, however, to circumscribe the duration. As the wonders of ancient days, the Pyramids attracted the curiosity of the ancients: a hundred generations, the leaves of autumn, have dropped into the grave; and after the fall of the Pharaohs and Ptolemies, the Cæsars and caliphs, the same Pyramids stand erect and unshaken above the floods of the Nile. A complex figure of various and minute parts is more accessible to injury and decay; and the silent lapse of time is often accelerated by hurricanes and earthquakes, by fires and inundations. The air and earth have doubtless been shaken, and the lofty turrets of Rome have tottered from their foundations, but the seven hills do not appear to be placed on the great cavities of the globe; nor has the city in any age been exposed to the convulsions of nature which in the climate of Antioch, Lisbon, or Lima, have crumbled in a few moments the works of ages in the dust. Fire is the most powerful agent of life and death: the rapid mischief may be kindled and propagated by the industry or negligence of mankind; and every period of the Roman annals is marked by the repetition of similar calamities. A memorable conflagration, the guilt or misfortune of Nero's reign, continued, though with unequal fury, either six or nine days. Innumerable buildings, crowded in close and crooked streets, supplied perpetual fuel for the flames; and when they ceased, four only of the fourteen regions were left entire; three were totally destroyed, and seven were deformed by the relics of smoking and lacerated edifices. In the full meridian of empire, the metropolis arose with fresh beauty from her ashes; yet the memory of the old deplored the irreparable losses, the arts of Greece, the trophies of victory, the monuments of primitive or fabulous antiquity. In the days of distress and anarchy every wound is mortal, every fall irretrievable; nor can the damage be restored either by the public care of government or the activity of private interest. Yet two causes may be alleged, which render the calamity of fire more destructive to a flourishing than a decayed city. 1. The more combustible materials of brick, timber, and metals are first melted and consumed, but the flames may play without injury or effect on the naked walls and massy arches that have been despoiled of their ornaments. 2. It is among the common and plebeian habitations that a mischievous spark is most easily blown to a conflagration; but as soon as they are devoured, the greater edifices which have resisted or escaped are left as so many islands in a state of solitude and safety. From her situation, Rome is exposed to the danger of frequent inundations. Without excepting the Tiber, the rivers that descend from either side of the Apennine have a short and irregular course; a shallow stream in the summer heats; an impetuous torrent when it is swelled in the spring or winter by the fall of rain and the melting of the snows. When the current is repelled from the sea by adverse winds, when the ordinary bed is inadequate to the weight of waters, they rise above the banks and overspread without limits or control the plains and cities of the adjacent country. Soon after the triumph of the first Punic War, the Tiber was increased by unusual rains; and the inundation, surpassing all former measure of time and place, destroyed all the buildings that were situate below the hills of Rome. According to the variety of ground, the same mischief was produced by different means; and the edifices were either swept away by the sudden impulse, or dissolved and undermined by the long continuance of the flood. Under the reign of Augustus the same calamity was renewed: the lawless river overturned the palaces and temples on its banks; and after the labors of the Emperor in cleansing and widening the bed that was incumbered with ruins, the vigilance of his successors was exercised by similar dangers and designs. The project of diverting into new channels the Tiber itself, or some of the dependent streams, was long opposed by superstition and local interests; nor did the use compensate the toil and costs of the tardy and imperfect execution. The servitude of rivers is the noblest and most important victory which man has obtained over the licentiousness of nature; and if such were the ravages of the Tiber under a firm and active government, what could oppose, or who can enumerate, the injuries of the city after the fall of the Western Empire? A remedy was at length produced by the evil itself: the accumulation of rubbish and the earth that has been washed down from the hills is supposed to have elevated the plain of Rome fourteen or fifteen feet perhaps above the ancient level: and the modern city is less accessible to the attacks of the river.

II. The crowd of writers of every nation who impute the destruction of the Roman monuments to the Goths and the Christians, have neglected to inquire how far they were animated by a hostile principle, and how far they possessed the means and the leisure to satiate their enmity. In the preceding volumes of this history I have described the triumph of barbarism and religion; and I can only resume in a few words their real or imaginary connection with the ruin of ancient Rome. Our fancy may create or adopt a pleasing romance: that the Goths and Vandals sallied from Scandinavia, ardent to avenge the flight of Odin, to break the chains and to chastise the oppressors of mankind; that they wished to burn the records of classic literature, and to found their national architecture on the broken members of the Tuscan and Corinthian orders. But in simple truth, the Northern conquerors were neither sufficiently savage nor sufficiently refined to entertain such aspiring ideas of destruction and revenge. The shepherds of Scythia and Germany had been educated in the armies of the Empire, whose discipline they acquired and whose weakness they invaded; with the familiar use of the Latin tongue, they had learned to reverence the name and titles of Rome; and though incapable of emulating, they were more inclined to admire than to abolish the arts and studies of a brighter period. In the transient possession of a rich and unresisting capital, the soldiers of Alaric and Genseric were stimulated by the passions of a victorious army; amidst the wanton indulgence of lust or cruelty, portable wealth was the object of their search; nor could they derive either pride or pleasure from the unprofitable reflection that they had battered to the ground the works of the consuls and Cæsars. Their moments were indeed precious: the Goths evacuated Rome on the sixth, the Vandals on the fifteenth day, and though it be far more difficult to build than to destroy, their hasty assault would have made a slight impression on the solid piles of antiquity. We may remember that both Alaric and Genseric affected to spare the buildings of the city; that they subsisted in strength and beauty under the auspicious government of Theodoric; and that the momentary resentment of Totila was disarmed by his own temper and the advice of his friends and enemies. From these innocent Barbarians the reproach may be transferred to the Catholics of Rome. The statues, altars, and houses of the dæmons were an abomination in their eyes; and in the absolute command of the city, they might labor with zeal and perseverance to erase the idolatry of their ancestors. The demolition of the temples in the East affords to *them* an example of conduct, and to *us* an argument of belief; and it is probable that a portion of guilt or merit may be imputed with justice to the Roman proselytes. Yet their abhorrence was confined to the monuments of heathen superstition; and the civil structures that were dedicated to the business or pleasure of society might be preserved without injury or scandal. The change of religion was accomplished not by a popular tumult, but by the decrees of the emperors, of the Senate, and of time. Of the Christian hierarchy, the bishops of Rome were commonly the most prudent and least fanatic; nor can any positive charge be opposed to the meritorious act of saving and converting the majestic structure of the Pantheon.

III. The value of any object that supplies the wants or pleasures of mankind is compounded of its substance and its form, of the materials and the manufacture. Its price must depend on the number of persons by whom it may be acquired and used; on the extent of the market; and consequently on the ease or difficulty of remote exportation according to the nature of the commodity, its local situation, and the temporary circumstances of the world. The Barbarian conquerors of Rome usurped in a moment the toil and treasure of successive ages; but except the luxuries of immediate consumption, they must view without desire all that could not be removed from the city in the Gothic wagons or the fleet of the Vandals. Gold and silver were the first objects of their avarice; as in every country, and in the smallest compass, they represent the most ample command of the industry and possessions of mankind. A vase or a statue of those precious metals might tempt the vanity of some Barbarian chief; but the grosser multitude, regardless of the form, was tenacious only of the substance; and the melted ingots might be readily divided and stamped into the current coin of the empire. The less active or less fortunate robbers were reduced to the baser plunder of brass, lead, iron, and copper: whatever had escaped the Goths and Vandals was pillaged by the Greek tyrants; and the Emperor Constans in his rapacious visit stripped the bronze tiles from the roof of the Pantheon. The edifices of Rome might be considered as a vast and various mine: the first labor of extracting the materials was already performed; the metals were purified and cast; the marbles were hewn and polished; and after foreign and domestic rapine had been satiated, the remains of the city, could a purchaser have been found, were still venal. The monuments of antiquity had been left naked of their precious ornaments; but the Romans would demolish with their own hands the arches and walls, if the hope of profit could surpass the cost of the labor and exportation. If Charlemagne had fixed in Italy the seat of the Western Empire, his genius would have aspired to restore, rather than to violate, the works of the Cæsars: but policy confined the French monarch to the forests of Germany; his taste could be gratified only by destruction; and the new palace of Aix-la-Chapelle was decorated with the marbles of Ravenna and Rome. Five hundred years after Charlemagne, a king of Sicily, Robert,—the wisest and most liberal sovereign of the age,—was supplied with the same materials by the easy navigation of the Tiber and the sea; and Petrarch sighs an indignant complaint that the ancient capital of the world should adorn from her own bowels the slothful luxury of Naples. But these examples of plunder or purchase were rare in the darker ages; and the Romans, alone and unenvied, might have applied to their private or public use the remaining structures of antiquity, if in their present form and situation they had not been useless in a great measure to the city and its inhabitants. The walls still described the old circumference, but the city had descended from the seven hills into the Campus Martius; and some of the noblest monuments which had braved the injuries of time were left in a desert, far remote from the habitations of mankind. The palaces of the senators were no longer adapted to the manners or fortunes of their indigent successors: the use of baths and porticos was forgotten; in the sixth century the games of the theatre, amphitheatre, and circus had been interrupted; some temples were devoted to the prevailing worship, but the Christian churches preferred the holy figure of the cross; and fashion, or reason, had distributed after a peculiar model the cells and offices of the cloister. Under the ecclesiastical reign, the number of these pious foundations was enormously multiplied; and the city was crowded with forty monasteries of men, twenty of women, and sixty chapters and colleges of canons and priests, who aggravated instead of relieving the depopulation of the tenth century. But if the forms of ancient architecture were disregarded by a people insensible of their use and beauty, the plentiful materials were applied to every call of necessity or superstition; till the fairest columns of the Ionic and Corinthian orders, the richest marbles of Paros and Numidia, were degraded, perhaps to the support of a convent or a stable. The daily havoc which is perpetrated by the Turks in the cities of Greece and Asia may afford a melancholy example; and in the gradual destruction of the monuments of Rome, Sixtus the Fifth may alone be excused for employing the stones of the Septizonium in the glorious edifice of St. Peter's. A fragment, a ruin, howsoever mangled or profaned, may be viewed with pleasure and regret; but the greater part of the marble was deprived of substance, as well as of place and proportion: it was burnt to lime for the purpose of cement. Since the arrival of Poggius, the temple of Concord and many capital structures had vanished from his eyes; and an epigram of the same age expresses a just and pious fear that the continuance of this practice would finally annihilate all the monuments of antiquity. The smallness of their numbers was the sole check on the demands and depredations of the Romans. The imagination of Petrarch might create the presence of a mighty people; and I hesitate to believe that even in the fourteenth century they could be reduced to a contemptible list of thirty-three thousand inhabitants. From that period to the reign of Leo the Tenth, if they multiplied to the amount of eighty-five thousand, the increase of citizens was in some degree pernicious to the ancient city.

IV. I have reserved for the last, the most potent and forcible cause of destruction, the domestic hostilities of the Romans themselves. Under the dominion of the Greek and French emperors, the peace of the city was disturbed by accidental though frequent seditions: it is from the decline of the latter, from the beginning of the tenth century, that we may date the licentiousness of private war, which violated with impunity the laws of the Code and the gospel, without respecting the majesty of the absent sovereign or the presence and person of the vicar of Christ. In a dark period of five hundred years, Rome was perpetually afflicted by the sanguinary quarrels of the nobles and the people, the Guelphs and Ghibelines, the Colonna and Ursini; and if much has escaped the knowledge, and much is unworthy of the notice, of history, I have exposed in the two preceding chapters the causes and effects of the public disorders. At such a time, when every quarrel was decided by the sword and none could trust their lives or properties to the impotence of law, the powerful citizens were armed for safety, or offense, against the domestic enemies whom they feared or hated. Except Venice alone, the same dangers and designs were common to all the free republics of Italy; and the nobles usurped the prerogative of fortifying their houses and erecting strong towers that were capable of resisting a sudden attack. The cities were filled with these hostile edifiçes; and the example of Lucca, which contained three hundred towers, her law which confined their height to the measure of fourscore feet, may be extended with suitable latitude to the more opulent and populous States. The first step of the senator Brancaleone in the establishment of peace and justice, was to demolish (as we have already seen) one hundred and forty of the towers of Rome; and in the last days of anarchy and discord, as late as the reign of Martin the Fifth, forty-four still stood in one of the thirteen or fourteen regions of the city. To this mischievous purpose the remains of antiquity were most readily adapted: the temples and arches afforded a broad and solid basis for the new structures of brick and stone; and we can name the modern turrets that were raised on the triumphal monuments of Julius Cæsar, Titus, and the Antonines. With some slight alterations, a theatre, an amphitheatre, a mausoleum, was transformed into a strong and spacious citadel. I need not repeat that the mole of Adrian has assumed the title and form of the castle of St. Angelo; the Septizonium of Severus was capable of standing against a royal army; the sepulchre of Metella has sunk under its outworks; the theatres of Pompey and Marcellus were occupied by the Savelli and Ursini families; and the rough fortress has been gradually softened to the splendor and elegance of an Italian palace. Even the churches were encompassed with arms and bulwarks, and the military engines on the roof of St. Peter's were the terror of the Vatican and the scandal of the Christian world. Whatever is fortified will be attacked; and whatever is attacked may be destroyed. Could the Romans have wrested from the popes the castle of St. Angelo, they had resolved by a public decree to annihilate that monument of servitude. Every building of defense was exposed to a siege; and in every siege the arts and engines of destruction were laboriously employed. After the death of Nicholas the Fourth, Rome, without a sovereign or a senate, was abandoned six months to the fury of civil war. "The houses," says a cardinal and poet of the times, "were crushed by the weight and velocity of enormous stones; the walls were perforated by the strokes of the battering-ram; the towers were involved in fire and smoke; and the assailants were stimulated by rapine and revenge." The work was consummated by the tyranny of the laws; and the factions of Italy alternately exercised a blind and thoughtless vengeance on their adversaries, whose houses and castles they razed to the ground. In comparing the *days* of foreign, with the *ages* of domestic hostility, we must pronounce that the latter have been far more ruinous to the city; and our opinion is confirmed by the evidence of Petrarch. « Behold, » says the laureate, « the relics of Rome, the image of her pristine greatness! neither time nor the Barbarian can boast the merit of this stupendous destruction: it was perpetrated by her own citizens, by the most illustrious of her sons; and your ancestors [he writes to a noble Annibaldi] have done with battering-ram what the Punic hero could not accomplish with the sword.» The influence of the two last principles of decay must in some degree be multiplied by each other, since the houses and towers which were subverted by civil war required a new and perpetual supply from the monuments of antiquity.

These general observations may be separately applied to the amphitheatre of Titus, which has obtained the name of the Coliseum, either from its magnitude or from Nero's colossal statue; an edifice, had it been left to time and nature, which might perhaps have claimed an eternal duration. The curious antiquaries who have computed the numbers and seats are disposed to believe that above the upper row of stone steps the amphitheatre was encircled and elevated with several stages of wooden galleries, which were repeatedly consumed by fire, and restored by the emperors. Whatever was precious, or portable, or profane, the statues of gods and heroes, and the costly ornaments of sculpture which were cast in brass or overspread with leaves of silver and gold, became the first prey of conquest or fanaticism, of the avarice of the Barbarians or the Christians. In the massy stones of the Coliseum, many holes are discerned; and the two most probable conjectures represent the various accidents of its decay. These stones were connected by solid links of brass or iron, nor had the eye of rapine overlooked the value of the baser metals; the vacant space was converted into a fair or market; the artisans of the Coliseum are mentioned in an ancient survey; and the chasms were perforated or enlarged to receive the poles that supported the shops or tents of the mechanic trades. Reduced to its naked majesty, the Flavian amphitheatre was contemplated with awe and admiration by the pilgrims of the North; and their rude enthusiasm broke forth in a sublime proverbial expression, which is recorded in the eighth century, in the fragments of the venerable Bede: «As long as the Coliseum stands, Rome shall stand; when the Coliseum falls, Rome will fall; when Rome falls, the world will fall." In the modern system of war a situation commanded by the three hills would not be chosen for a fortress: but the strength of the walls and arches could resist the engines of assault; a numerous garrison might be lodged in the inclosure; and while one faction occupied the Vatican and the Capitol, the other was intrenched in the Lateran and the Coliseum.

The abolition at Rome of the ancient games must be understood with some latitude; and the carnival sports of the Testacean Mount and the Circus Agonalis were regulated by the law or custom of the city. The senator presided with dignity and pomp to adjudge and distribute the prizes, the gold ring, or the *pallium*, as it was styled, of cloth or silk. A tribute on the Jews supplied the annual expense; and the races on foot, on horseback, or in chariots, were ennobled by a tilt and tournament of seventy-two of the Roman youth. In the year 1332 a bull-feast, after the fashion of the Moors and Spaniards, was celebrated in the Coliseum itself; and the living manners are painted in a diary of the times. A convenient order of benches was restored, and a general proclamation as far as Rimini and Ravenna invited the nobles to exercise their skill and courage in this perilous adventure. The Roman ladies were marshaled in three squadrons and seated in three balconies, which on this day, the third of September, were lined with scarlet cloth. The fair Jacova di Rovere led the matrons from beyond the Tiber, a pure and native race who still represent the features and character of antiquity. The remainder of the city was divided as usual between the Colonna and Ursini: the two factions were proud of the number and beauty of their female bands: the charms of Savella Ursini are mentioned with praise, and the Colonna regretted the absence of the youngest of their house, who had sprained her ankle in the garden of Nero's tower. The lots of the champions were drawn by an old and respectable citizen; and they descended into the arena, or pit, to encounter the wild bulls, on foot as it should seem, with a single spear. Amidst the crowd, our annalist has selected the names, colors, and devices of twenty of the most conspicuous knights. Several of the names are the most illustrious of Rome and the ecclesiastical State: Malatesta, Polenta, Della Valle, Cafarello, Savelli, Capoccio, Conti, Annibaldi, Altieri, Corsi: the colors were adapted to their taste and situation; the devices are expressive of hope or despair, and breathe the spirit of gallantry and arms. « I am alone, like the youngest of the Horatii,» the confidence of an intrepid stranger; « I live disconsolate,» a weeping widower; « I burn under the ashes,» a discreet lover; « I adore Lavinia, or Lucretia,» the ambiguous declaration of a modern passion; « My faith is as pure,» the motto of a white livery; « Who is stronger than myself ? » of a lion's hide; « If I am drowned in blood, what a pleasant death ! » the wish of ferocious courage. The pride or prudence of the Ursini restrained them from the field, which was occupied by three of their hereditary rivals, whose inscriptions denoted the lofty greatness of the Colonna name: « Though sad, I am strong; » « Strong as I am great; » « If I fall,» addressing himself to the spectators, « you fall with me » — intimating (says the contemporary writer) that while the other families were the subjects of the Vatican, they alone were the supporters of the Capitol. The combats of the amphitheatre were dangerous and bloody. Every champion successively encountered a wild bull; and the victory may be ascribed to the quadrupeds, since no more than eleven were left on the field, with the loss of nine wounded and eighteen killed on the side of their adversaries. Some of the noblest families might mourn; but the pomp of the funerals in the churches of St. John Lateran and Sta. Maria Maggiore afforded a second holiday to the people. Doubtless it was not in such conflicts that the blood of the Romans should have been shed: yet in blaming their rashness we are compelled to applaud their gallantry; and the noble volunteers who display their magnificence and risk their lives under the balconies of the fair, excite a more generous sympathy than the thousands of captives and malefactors who were reluctantly dragged to the scene of slaughter.

This use of the amphitheatre was a rare, perhaps a singular, festival: the demand for the materials was a daily and continual want which the citizens could gratify without restraint or remorse. In the fourteenth century a scandalous act of concord secured to both factions the privilege of extracting stones from the free and common quarry of the Coliseum; and Poggius laments that the greater part of these stones had been burnt to lime by the folly of the Romans. To check this abuse, and to prevent the nocturnal crimes that might be perpetrated in the vast and gloomy recess, Eugenius the Fourth surrounded it with a wall; and by a charter long extant, granted both the ground and edifice to the monks of an adjacent convent. After his death the wall was overthrown in a tumult of the people; and had they themselves respected the noblest monument of their fathers, they might have justified the resolve that it should never be degraded to private property. The inside was damaged; but in the middle of the sixteenth century, an era of taste and learning, the exterior circumference of one thousand six hundred and twelve feet was still entire and inviolate; a triple elevation of fourscore arches which rose to the height of one hundred and eight feet. Of the present ruin, the nephews of Paul the Third are the guilty agents; and every traveler who views the Farnese palace may curse the sacrilege and luxury of these upstart princes. A similar reproach is applied to the Barberini; and the repetition of injury might be dreaded from every reign, till the Coliseum was placed under the safeguard of religion by the most liberal of the pontiffs, Benedict the Fourteenth, who consecrated a spot which persecution and fable had stained with the blood of so many Christian martyrs.

When Petrarch first gratified his eyes with a view of those monuments, whose scattered fragments so far surpass the most eloquent descriptions, he was astonished at the supine indifference of the Romans themselves; he was humbled rather than elated by the discovery that, except his friend Rienzi and one of the Colonna, a stranger of the Rhône was more conversant with these antiquities than the nobles and natives of the metropolis. The ignorance and credulity of the Romans are elaborately displayed in the old survey of the city, which was composed about the beginning of the thirteenth century; and without dwelling on the manifold errors of name and place, the legend of the Capitol may provoke a smile of contempt and indignation. "The Capitol," says the anonymous writer, "is so named as being the head of the world, where the consuls and senators formerly resided for the government of the city and the globe. The strong and lofty walls were covered with glass and gold, and crowned with a roof of the richest and most curious carving. Below the citadel stood a palace, of gold for the greatest part, decorated with precious stones, and whose value might be esteemed at one-third of the world itself. The statues of all the provinces were arranged in order, each with a small bell suspended from its neck; and such was the contrivance of art magic, that if the province rebelled against Rome the statue turned round to that quarter of the heavens, the bell rang, the prophet of the Capitol reported the prodigy, and the Senate was admonished of the impending danger.» A second example, of less importance though of equal absurdity, may be drawn from the two marble horses, led by two naked youths, which have since been transported from the baths of Constantine to the Quirinal Hill. The groundless application of the names of Phidias and Praxiteles may perhaps be excused: but these Grecian sculptors should not have been removed above four hundred years from the age of Pericles to that of Tiberius; they should not have been transformed into two philosophers or magicians, whose nakedness was the symbol of truth or knowledge, who revealed to the Emperor his most secret actions, and after refusing all pecuniary recompense, solicited the honor of leaving this eternal monument of themselves. Thus, awake to the power of magic, the Romans were insensible to the beauties of art: no more than five statues were visible to the eyes of Poggius; and of the multitudes which chance or design had buried under the ruins, the resurrection was fortunately delayed till a safer and more enlightened age. The Nile, which now adorns the Vatican, had been explored by some laborers in digging a vineyard near the temple, or convent, of the Minerva: but the impatient proprietor, who was tormented by some visits of curiosity, restored the unprofitable marble to its former grave. The discovery of the statue of Pompey, ten feet in length, was the occasion of a lawsuit. It had been found under a partition wall: the equitable judge had pronounced that the head should be separated from the body to satisfy the claims of the contiguous owners; and the sentence would have been executed if the intercession of a cardinal and the liberality of a pope had not rescued the Roman hero from the hands of his barbarous countrymen.

But the clouds of barbarism were gradually dispelled, and the peaceful authority of Martin the Fifth and his successors restored the ornaments of the city as well as the order of the ecclesiastical State. The improvements of Rome since the fifteenth century have not been the spontaneous produce of freedom and industry. The first and most natural root of a great city is the labor and populousness of the adjacent country, which supplies the materials of subsistence, of manufactures, and of foreign trade. But the greater part of the Campagna of Rome is reduced to a dreary and desolate wilderness; the overgrown estates of the princes and the clergy are cultivated by the lazy hands of indigent and hopeless vassals; and the scanty harvests are confined or exported for the benefit of a monopoly. A second and more artificial cause of the growth of a metropolis is the residence of a monarch, the expense of a luxurious court, and the tributes of dependent provinces. Those provinces and tributes had been lost in the fall of the Empire: and if some streams of the silver of Peru and the gold of Brazil have been attracted by the Vatican, the revenues of the cardinals, the fees of office, the oblations of pilgrims and clients, and the remnant of ecclesiastical taxes, afford a poor and precarious supply, which maintains however the idleness of the court and city. The population of Rome, far below the measure of the great capitals of Europe, does not exceed one hundred and seventy thousand inhabitants; and within the spacious inclosure of the walls the largest portion of the seven hills is overspread with vineyards and ruins. The beauty and splendor of the modern city may be ascribed to the abuses of the government, to the influence of superstition. Each reign (the exceptions are rare) has been marked by the rapid elevation of a new family, enriched by the childless pontiff at the expense of the Church and country. The palaces of these fortunate nephews are the most costly monuments of elegance and servitude: the perfect arts of architecture, painting, and sculpture have been prostituted in their service; and their galleries and gardens are decorated with the most precious works of antiquity which taste or vanity has prompted them to collect. The ecclesiastical revenues were more decently employed by the popes themselves in the pomp of the Catholic worship; but it is superfluous to enumerate their pious foundations of altars, chapels, and churches, since these lesser stars are eclipsed by the sun of the Vatican, by the dome of St. Peter, the most glorious structure that ever has been applied to the use of religion. The fame of Julius the Second, Leo the Tenth, and Sixtus the Fifth is accompanied by the superior merit of Bramante and Fontana, of Raphael and Michael Angelo; and the same munificence which had been displayed in palaces and temples was directed with equal zeal to revive and emulate the labors of antiquity. Prostrate obelisks were raised from the ground and erected in the most conspicuous places; of the eleven aqueducts of the Cæsars and consuls, three were restored; the artificial rivers were conducted over a long series of old, or of new arches, to discharge into marble basins a flood of salubrious and refreshing waters: and the spectator, impatient to ascend the steps of St. Peter's, is detained by a column of Egyptian granite, which rises between two lofty and perpetual fountains to the height of one hundred and twenty feet. The map, the description, the monuments of ancient Rome have been elucidated by the diligence of the antiquarian and the student; and the footsteps of heroes, the relics, not of superstition but of empire, are devoutly visited by a new race of pilgrims from the remote and once savage countries of the North.

All the foregoing selections are made from 'The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire'

WILLIAM SCHWENCK GILBERT

(1836–)

When, after appearing from time to time in the London Fun, the 'Bab Ballads' were published in book form in 1870, everybody, young and old, found them provocative of hearty laughter. «Much sound and little sense,» was the title-page motto. Perhaps the fact that Mr. Gilbert's readers did not know why they laughed was one great charm of the ballads. The humor was felt, not analyzed, and involved no mental fatigue. If there was «little sense,» no continuity of meaning, there was usually significant suggestion; and social foibles were touched off with good-natured irony in a delightfully inconsequent fashion. The «much sound» was a spirited lyric swing which clung to the memory, a rich rhythm, and a rollicking spontaneity, which disregarded considerations of grammar and pronunciation in a way that only added to the fun.

William S. Gilbert

The 'Bab Ballads,' and 'More Bab Ballads' which appeared in 1872, have become classic. In many of them may be found the germs of the librettos which have made Gilbert famous in comic opera. 'Pinafore,' 'The Mikado,' 'Patience,' and many others of a long and well-known list written to Sir Arthur Sullivan's music, have furnished the public with many popular songs. A volume of dainty lyrics has been made up from them; and, entitled 'Songs of a Savoyard' (from the Savoy Theatre of London, where the operas were first represented), was published in 1890.

Mr. Gilbert was born in London November 18th, 1836, and educated in that city; after his graduation from the University of London he studied law, and was called to the bar of the Inner Temple in 1863. Five years later he became a captain of the Royal Aberdeenshire Highlanders. The success of his first play, 'Dulcamara,' in 1866, led him to abandon the law, and he has since devoted himself to authorship.

CAPTAIN REECE

Of all the ships upon the blue,
No ship contained a better crew
Than that of worthy Captain Reece,
Commanding of The Mantlepiece.

He was adored by all his men,
For worthy Captain Reece, R. N.,
Did all that lay within him to
Promote the comfort of his crew.

If ever they were dull or sad,
Their captain danced to them like mad,
Or told, to make the time pass by,
Droll legends of his infancy.

A feather-bed had every man,
Warm slippers and hot-water can,
Brown windsor from the captain's store;
A valet, too, to every four.

Did they with thirst in summer burn,
Lo! seltzogenes at every turn;
And on all very sultry days
Cream ices handed round on trays.

Then, currant wine and ginger pops
Stood handily on all the «tops»;
And also, with amusement rife,
A «Zoetrope, or Wheel of Life.»

New volumes came across the sea
From Mr. Mudie's libraree;
The Times and Saturday Review
Beguiled the leisure of the crew.

Kind-hearted Captain Reece, R. N.,
Was quite devoted to his men;
In point of fact, good Captain Reece
Beatified The Mantelpiece.

One summer eve, at half-past ten,
He said (addressing all his men):—
«Come, tell me, please, what I can do
To please and gratify my crew.

«By any reasonable plan
I'll make you happy if I can,—
My own convenience count as *nil:*
It is my duty, and I will.»

Then up and answered William Lee
(The kindly captain's coxwain he,
A nervous, shy, low-spoken man);
He cleared his throat, and thus began:—

«You have a daughter, Captain Reece,
Ten female cousins and a niece,
A ma, if what I'm told is true,
Six sisters, and an aunt or two.

«Now, somehow, sir, it seems to me,
More friendly-like we all should be,
If you united of 'em to
Unmarried members of the crew.

«If you'd ameliorate our life,
Let each select from them a wife;
And as for nervous me, old pal,
Give me your own enchanting gal!»

Good Captain Reece, that worthy man,
Debated on his coxwain's plan:—
«I quite agree,» he said, «O Bill:
It is my duty, and I will.

«My daughter, that enchanting gurl,
Has just been promised to an Earl,
And all my other familee
To peers of various degree.

«But what are dukes and viscounts to
The happiness of all my crew?
The word I gave you I'll fulfill;
It is my duty, and I will.

«As you desire it shall befall;
I'll settle thousands on you all,
And I shall be, despite my hoard,
The only bachelor on board.»

The boatswain of the Mantelpiece,
He blushed and spoke to Captain Reece:—

«I beg your Honor's leave,» he said:—
«If you would wish to go and wed,

«I have a widowed mother who
Would be the very thing for you—
She long has loved you from afar:
She washes for you, Captain R.»

The captain saw the dame that day—
Addressed her in his playful way:—
«And did it want a wedding ring?
It was a tempting ickle sing!

«Well, well, the chaplain I will seek,
We'll all be married this day week
At yonder church upon the hill;
It is my duty, and I will!»

The sisters, cousins, aunts, and niece,
And widowed ma of Captain Reece,
Attended there as they were bid:
It was their duty, and they did.

THE YARN OF THE NANCY BELL

'TWAS on the shores that round our coast
From Deal to Ramsgate span,
That I found alone on a piece of stone
An elderly naval man.

His hair was weedy, his beard was long,
And weedy and long was he;
And I heard this wight on the shore recite,
In a singular minor key:—

«Oh, I am a cook, and a captain bold,
And the mate of the Nancy brig,
And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig.»

And he shook his fists and he tore his hair,
Till I really felt afraid,
For I couldn't help thinking the man had been drinking,
And so I simply said:—

«O elderly man, it's little I know
Of the duties of men of the sea,
And I'll eat my hand if I understand
However you can be

«At once a cook, and a captain bold,
And the mate of the Nancy brig,
And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig.»

And he gave a hitch to his trousers, which
Is a trick all seamen larn,
And having got rid of a thumping quid,
He spun his painful yarn:—

«'Twas in the good ship Nancy Bell
That we sailed to the Indian Sea,
And there on a reef we come to grief,
Which has often occurred to me.

«And pretty nigh all the crew was drowned
(There was seventy-seven o' soul),
And only ten of the Nancy's men
Said ‹Here!› to the muster-roll.

«There was me and the cook and the captain bold,
And the mate of the Nancy brig,
And the bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig.

«For a month we'd neither wittles nor drink,
Till a-hungry we did feel;
So we drawed a lot, and accordin', shot
The captain for our meal.

«The next lot fell to the Nancy's mate,
And a delicate dish he made;
Then our appetite with the midshipmite
We seven survivors stayed.

«And then we murdered the bo'sun tight,
And he much resembled pig;
Then we wittled free, did the cook and me
On the crew of the captain's gig.

«Then only the cook and me was left,
And the delicate question, ‹Which

Of us two goes to the kettle?’ arose,
And we argued it out as sich.

“For I loved that cook as a brother, I did,
And the cook he worshiped me;
But we’d both be blowed if we’d either be stowed
In the other chap’s hold, you see.

“‘I’ll be eat if you dines off me,’ says Tom;
‘Yes, that,’ says I, ‘you’ll be:
I’m boiled if I die, my friend,’ quoth I;
And ‘Exactly so,’ quoth he.

“Says he, ‘Dear James, to murder me
Were a foolish thing to do,
For don’t you see that you can’t cook *me*,
While I can—and will—cook *you?*’

“So he boils the water, and takes the salt
And the pepper in portions true
(Which he never forgot), and some chopped shalot,
And some sage and parsley too.

“‘Come here,’ says he, with a proper pride,
Which his smiling features tell;
‘’Twill soothing be if I let you see
How extremely nice you’ll smell.’

“And he stirred it round and round and round,
And he sniffed at the foaming froth;
When I ups with his heels, and smothers his squeals
In the scum of the boiling broth.

“And I eat that cook in a week or less,
And—as I eating be
The last of his chops, why, I almost drops,
For a wessel in sight I see!

. . . .

“And I never larf, and I never smile,
And I never lark nor play,
But sit and croak, and a single joke
I have—which is to say:—

“‘Oh, I am a cook, and a captain bold,
And the mate of the Nancy brig,
And a bo’sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain’s gig!’”

THE BISHOP OF RUM-TI-FOO

From east and south the holy clan
Of bishops gathered to a man;
To Synod, called Pan-Anglican,
In flocking crowds they came.
Among them was a bishop who
Had lately been appointed to
The balmy isle of Rum-ti-Foo,
And Peter was his name.

His people — twenty-three in sum —
They played the eloquent tum-tum,
And lived on scalps served up in rum —
The only sauce they knew.
When first good Bishop Peter came
(For Peter was that bishop's name),
To humor them, he did the same
As they of Rum-ti-Foo.

His flock, I've often heard him tell,
(His name was Peter) loved him well,
And summoned by the sound of bell,
In crowds together came.
« Oh, massa, why you go away?
Oh, Massa Peter, please to stay.»
(They called him Peter, people say,
Because it was his name.)

He told them all good boys to be,
And sailed away across the sea;
At London Bridge that bishop he
Arrived one Tuesday night;
And as that night he homeward strode
To his Pan-Anglican abode,
He passed along the Borough Road,
And saw a gruesome sight.

He saw a crowd assembled round
A person dancing on the ground,
Who straight began to leap and bound
With all his might and main.
To see that dancing man he stopped,
Who twirled and wriggled, skipped and hopped,
Then down incontinently dropped,
And then sprang up again.

The bishop chuckled at the sight.
«This style of dancing would delight
A simple Rum-ti-Foozleite:
I'll learn it if I can,
To please the tribe when I get back.»
He begged the man to teach his knack.
«Right reverend sir, in half a crack!»
Replied that dancing man.

The dancing man he worked away,
And taught the bishop every day;
The dancer skipped like any fay —
Good Peter did the same.
The bishop buckled to his task,
With *battements* and *pas de basque*.
(I'll tell you, if you care to ask,
That Peter was his name.)

«Come, walk like this,» the dancer said;
«Stick out your toes — stick in your head,
Stalk on with quick, galvanic tread —
Your fingers thus extend;
The attitude's considered quaint.»
The weary bishop, feeling faint,
Replied, «I do not say it ain't,
But 'Time!' my Christian friend!»

«We now proceed to something new:
Dance as the Paynes and Lauris do,
Like this — one, two — one, two — one, two.»
The bishop, never proud,
But in an overwhelming heat
(His name was Peter, I repeat)
Performed the Payne and Lauri feat,
And puffed his thanks aloud.

Another game the dancer planned:
«Just take your ankle in your hand,
And try, my lord, if you can stand —
Your body stiff and stark.
If when revisiting your see
You learnt to hop on shore, like me,
The novelty would striking be,
And must attract remark.»

«No,» said the worthy bishop, «no;
That is a length to which, I trow,
Colonial bishops cannot go.
You may express surprise
At finding bishops deal in pride—
But if that trick I ever tried,
I should appear undignified
In Rum-ti-Foozle's eyes.

«The islanders of Rum-ti-Foo
Are well-conducted persons, who
Approve a joke as much as you,
And laugh at it as such;
But if they saw their bishop land,
His leg supported in his hand,
The joke they wouldn't understand—
'Twould pain them very much!»

GENTLE ALICE BROWN

It was a robber's daughter, and her name was Alice Brown;
Her father was the terror of a small Italian town;
Her mother was a foolish, weak, but amiable old thing:
But it isn't of her parents that I'm going for to sing.

As Alice was a-sitting at her window-sill one day,
A beautiful young gentleman he chanced to pass that way;
She cast her eyes upon him, and he looked so good and true,
That she thought, «I could be happy with a gentleman like you!»

And every morning passed her house that cream of gentlemen;
She knew she might expect him at a quarter unto ten;
A sorter in the Custom-house, it was his daily road
(The Custom-house was fifteen minutes' walk from her abode).

But Alice was a pious girl, who knew it wasn't wise
To look at strange young sorters with expressive purple eyes;
So she sought the village priest to whom her family confessed,
The priest by whom their little sins were carefully assessed.

«O holy father,» Alice said, «'twould grieve you, would it not,
To discover that I was a most disreputable lot?
Of all unhappy sinners I'm the most unhappy one!»
The padre said, «Whatever have you been and gone and done?»

«I have helped mamma to steal a little kiddy from its dad,
I've assisted dear papa in cutting up a little lad,
I've planned a little burglary and forged a little cheque,
And slain a little baby for the coral on its neck!»

The worthy pastor heaved a sigh, and dropped a silent tear,
And said, «You mustn't judge yourself too heavily, my dear:
It's wrong to murder babies, little corals for to fleece;
But sins like these one expiates at half-a-crown apiece.

«Girls will be girls — you're very young, and flighty in your mind;
Old heads upon young shoulders we must not expect to find;
We mustn't be too hard upon these little girlish tricks —
Let's see — five crimes at half-a-crown — exactly twelve-and-six.»

«O father,» little Alice cried, «your kindness makes me weep,
You do these little things for me so singularly cheap;
Your thoughtful liberality I never can forget;
But oh! there is another crime I haven't mentioned yet!

«A pleasant-looking gentleman, with pretty purple eyes,
I've noticed at my window, as I've sat a-catching flies;
He passes by it every day as certain as can be —
I blush to say I've winked at him and he has winked at me!"

«For shame!» said Father Paul, «my erring daughter! On my word,
This is the most distressing news that I have ever heard.
Why, naughty girl, your excellent papa has pledged your hand
To a promising young robber, the lieutenant of his band!

«This dreadful piece of news will pain your worthy parents so!
They are the most remunerative customers I know;
For many, many years they've kept starvation from my doors:
I never knew so criminal a family as yours!

«The common country folk in this insipid neighborhood
Have nothing to confess, they're so ridiculously good;
And if you marry any one respectable at all,
Why, you'll reform, and what will then become of Father Paul?»

The worthy priest, he up and drew his cowl upon his crown,
And started off in haste to tell the news to Robber Brown —
To tell him how his daughter, who was now for marriage fit,
Had winked upon a sorter, who reciprocated it.

Good Robber Brown he muffled up his anger pretty well;
He said, «I have a notion, and that notion I will tell:

I will nab this gay young sorter, terrify him into fits,
And get my gentle wife to chop him into little bits.

«I've studied human nature, and I know a thing or two:
Though a girl may fondly love a living gent, as many do—
A feeling of disgust upon her senses there will fall
When she looks upon his body chopped particularly small.»

He traced that gallant sorter to a still suburban square;
He watched his opportunity, and seized him unaware;
He took a life-preserver and he hit him on the head,
And Mrs. Brown dissected him before she went to bed.

And pretty little Alice grew more settled in her mind;
She never more was guilty of a weakness of the kind;
Until at length good Robber Brown bestowed her pretty hand
On the promising young robber, the lieutenant of his band.

THE CAPTAIN AND THE MERMAIDS

I sing a legend of the sea,
So hard-a-port upon your lee!
A ship on starboard tack!
She's bound upon a private cruise—
(This is the kind of spice I use
To give a salt-sea smack).

Behold, on every afternoon
(Save in a gale or strong monsoon)
Great Captain Capel Cleggs
(Great morally, though rather short)
Sat at an open weather-port
And aired his shapely legs.

And mermaids hung around in flocks,
On cable chains and distant rocks,
To gaze upon those limbs;
For legs like those, of flesh and bone,
Are things «not generally known»
To any merman timbs.

But mermen didn't seem to care
Much time (as far as I'm aware)
With Cleggs's legs to spend;
Though mermaids swam around all day
And gazed, exclaiming, «*That's* the way
A gentleman should end!

« A pair of legs with well-cut knees,
And calves and ankles such as these
Which we in rapture hail,
Are far more eloquent, it's clear
(When clothed in silk and kerseymere),
Than any nasty tail.»

And Cleggs — a worthy, kind old boy —
Rejoiced to add to others' joy,
And when the day was dry,
Because it pleased the lookers-on,
He sat from morn till night — though con-
Stitutionally shy.

At first the mermen laughed, « Pooh! pooh!»
But finally they jealous grew,
And sounded loud recalls;
But vainly. So these fishy males
Declared they too would clothe their tails
In silken hose and smalls.

They set to work, these watermen,
And made their nether robes — but when
They drew with dainty touch
The kerseymere upon their tails,
They found it scraped against their scales,
And hurt them very much.

The silk, besides, with which they chose
To deck their tails by way of hose
(They never thought of shoon)
For such a use was much too thin,—
It tore against the caudal fin,
And « went in ladders » soon.

So they designed another plan:
They sent their most seductive man,
This note to him to show:—
« Our Monarch sends to Captain Cleggs
His humble compliments, and begs
He'll join him down below;

« We've pleasant homes below the sea —
Besides, if Captain Cleggs should be
(As our advices say)

A judge of mermaids, he will find
Our lady fish of every kind
   Inspection will repay."

Good Capel sent a kind reply,
For Capel thought he could descry
   An admirable plan
To study all their ways and laws —
(But not their lady fish, because
   He was a married man).

The merman sank — the captain too
Jumped overboard, and dropped from view
   Like stone from catapult;
And when he reached the merman's lair,
He certainly was welcomed there,
   But ah! with what result!

They didn't let him learn their law,
Or make a note of what he saw,
   Or interesting mem.;
The lady fish he couldn't find,
But that, of course, he didn't mind —
   He didn't come for them.

For though when Captain Capel sank,
The mermen drawn in double rank
   Gave him a hearty hail,
Yet when secure of Captain Cleggs,
They cut off both his lovely legs,
   And gave him *such* a tail!

When Captain Cleggs returned aboard,
His blithesome crew convulsive roar'd,
   To see him altered so.
The admiralty did insist
That he upon the half-pay list
   Immediately should go.

In vain declared the poor old salt,
"It's my misfortune — not my fault,"
   With tear and trembling lip —
In vain poor Capel begged and begged.
"A man must be completely legged
   Who rules a British ship."

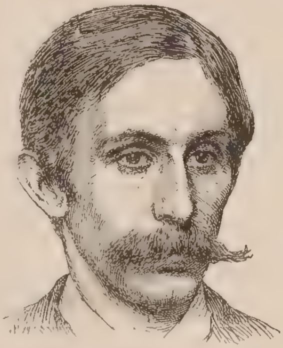
So spake the stern First Lord aloud,—
He was a wag, though very proud,—
  And much rejoiced to say,
«You're only half a captain now—
And so, my worthy friend, I vow
  You'll only get half-pay!»

All the above selections are made from ‹Fifty Bab Ballads.›

RICHARD WATSON GILDER

(1844–)

Richard Watson Gilder is the son of a clergyman, the Rev. William H. Gilder, who published two literary reviews in Philadelphia. He was born in Bordentown, New Jersey, February 8th, 1844, and with such ancestry and home influence came easily to journalism and literary work. He got his schooling in the Bellevue Seminary, which was founded by his father. As with so many young Americans of the time, the war came to interrupt his studies; and in 1863 he served in the «Emergency Corps,» in the defense of Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Mr. Gilder is one of the American writers who have successfully combined journalism and literature. He began by doing newspaper work, and then by a natural transition became in 1869 editor of Hours at Home, and shortly thereafter associate editor of Scribner's Magazine with Dr. J. G. Holland. This representative monthly was changed in name to The Century, and upon the death of Dr. Holland in 1881 Mr. Gilder became its editor-in-chief. His influence in this conspicuous position has been wholesome and helpful in the encouraging of literature, and in the discussion of current questions of importance through a popular medium which reaches great numbers of the American people. The Century under his direction has been receptive to young writers and artists of ability, and many since known to fame made their maiden appearance in its pages.


Richard W. Gilder

In addition to his influence on the literary movement, Mr. Gilder has been active in philanthropic and political work. He has secured legislation for the improvement of tenements in cities; he has taken interest in the formation of public kindergartens; and given of his time and strength to further other reforms. His influence in New York City, too, has been a factor in developing the social aspects of literary and art life there. From Dickinson College he has received the degree of LL. D., and from Princeton that of L. H. D.

Mr. Gilder's reputation as a writer is based upon his verse. Only very occasionally does he publish an essay, though thoughtful, strongly written editorials from his pen in his magazine are frequent.

But it is his verse-writing that has given him his place—a distinct and honorable one—in American letters. The fine quality and promise of his work was recognized upon the publication of ‘The New Day’ in 1875, a first volume which was warmly received. It showed the influence of Italian studies, and contained lyric work of much imaginative beauty. The musicalness of it and the delicately ideal treatment of the love passion were noticeable characteristics. In his subsequent books—‘The Celestial Passion,’ 1887; ‘Lyrics,’ 1885 and 1887; ‘Two Worlds, and Other Poems,’ 1891; ‘The Great Remembrance, and Other Poems,’ 1893: the contents of these being gathered finally into the one volume ‘Five Books of Song,’ 1894—he has given further proof of his genuine lyric gift, his work in later years having a wider range of themes, a broadening vision and deepening purpose. He remains nevertheless essentially a lyrist, a maker of songs; a thorough artist who has seriousness, dignity, and charm. His is an earnest nature, sensitive alike to vital contemporaneous problems and to the honey-sweet voice of the Ideal.

[All the following citations from Mr. Gilder's poems are copyrighted, and are reprinted here by special permission of the author and his publishers.]

TWO SONGS FROM ‘THE NEW DAY’

I

NOT from the whole wide world I chose thee,
Sweetheart, light of the land and the sea!
The wide, wide world could not inclose thee—
For thou art the whole wide world to me.

II

YEARS have flown since I knew thee first,
And I know thee as water is known of thirst;
Yet I knew thee of old at the first sweet sight,
And thou art strange to me, Love, to-night.

«ROSE-DARK THE SOLEMN SUNSET»

ROSE-DARK the solemn sunset
That holds my thought of thee;
With one star in the heavens
And one star in the sea.

On high no lamp is lighted,
Nor where the long waves flow.

Save the one star of evening
  And the shadow star below.

Light of my life, the darkness
  Comes with the twilight dream;
Thou art the bright star shining,
  And I but the shadowy gleam.

NON SINE DOLORE

What, then, is Life,—what Death?
  Thus the Answerer saith;
O faithless mortal, bend thy head and listen:

Down o'er the vibrant strings,
That thrill, and moan, and mourn, and glisten,
The Master draws his bow.
A voiceless pause: then upward, see, it springs,
Free as a bird with unimprisoned wings!
In twain the chord was cloven,
While, shaken with woe,
With breaks of instant joy all interwoven,
Piercing the heart with lyric knife,
On, on the ceaseless music sings,
Restless, intense, serene;—
Life is the downward stroke; the upward, Life;
Death but the pause between.

Then spake the Questioner: If 't were only this,
Ah, who could face the abyss
That plunges steep athwart each human breath?
If the new birth of Death
Meant only more of Life as mortals know it,
What priestly balm, what song of highest poet,
Could heal one sentient soul's immitigable pain?
All, all were vain!
If, having soared pure spirit at the last,
Free from the impertinence and warp of flesh
We find half joy, half pain, on every blast;
Are caught again in closer-woven mesh—
Ah! who would care to die
From out these fields and hills, and this familiar sky;
These firm, sure hands that compass us, this dear humanity?

Again the Answerer saith:—
O ye of little faith,
Shall then the spirit prove craven,
And Death's divine deliverance but give
A summer rest and haven?
By all most noble in us, by the light that streams
Into our waking dreams,
Ah, we who know what Life is, let us live!
Clearer and freer, who shall doubt?
Something of dust and darkness cast forever out;
But Life, still Life, that leads to higher Life,
Even though the highest be not free from immortal strife.

The highest! Soul of man, oh be thou bold,
And to the brink of thought draw near, behold!
Where, on the earth's green sod,
Where, where in all the universe of God,
Hath strife forever ceased?
When hath not some great orb flashed into space
The terror of its doom? When hath no human face
Turned earthward in despair,
For that some horrid sin had stamped its image there?

If at our passing Life be Life increased,
And we ourselves flame pure unfettered soul,
Like the Eternal Power that made the whole
And lives in all he made
From shore of matter to the unknown spirit shore;
If, sire to son, and tree to limb,
Cycle on countless cycle more and more
We grow to be like him;
If he lives on, serene and unafraid,
Through all his light, his love, his living thought,
One with the sufferer, be it soul or star;
If he escape not pain, what beings that are
Can e'er escape while Life leads on and up the unseen way and far?
If he escape not, by whom all was wrought,
Then shall not we,
Whate'er of godlike solace still may be,—
For in all worlds there is no Life without a pang, and can be naught.

No Life without a pang! It were not Life,
If ended were the strife—
Man were not man, nor God were truly God!
See from the sod

The lark thrill skyward in an arrow of song:
Even so from pain and wrong
Upsprings the exultant spirit, wild and free.
He knows not all the joy of liberty
Who never yet was crushed 'neath heavy woe.
He doth not know,
Nor can, the bliss of being brave
Who never hath faced death, nor with unquailing eye
Hath measured his own grave.
Courage, and pity, and divinest scorn —
Self-scorn, self-pity, and high courage of the soul;
The passion for the goal;
The strength to never yield though all be lost —
All these are born
Of endless strife; this is the eternal cost
Of every lovely thought that through the portal
Of human minds doth pass with following light.
Blanch not, O trembling mortal!
But with extreme and terrible delight
Know thou the truth,
Nor let thy heart be heavy with false ruth.

No passing burden is our earthly sorrow,
That shall depart in some mysterious morrow.
'Tis His one universe where'er we are —
One changeless law from sun to viewless star.
Were sorrow evil here, evil it were forever,
Beyond the scope and help of our most keen endeavor
God doth not dote,
His everlasting purpose shall not fail.
Here where our ears are weary with the wail
And weeping of the sufferers; there where the Pleiads float —
Here, there, forever, pain most dread and dire
Doth bring the intensest bliss, the dearest and most sure.
'Tis not from Life aside, it doth endure
Deep in the secret heart of all existence.
It is the inward fire,
The heavenly urge, and the divine insistence.
Uplift thine eyes, O Questioner, from the sod!
It were no longer Life,
If ended were the strife;
Man were not man, God were not truly God.

«HOW PADEREWSKI PLAYS»

I

If songs were perfume, color, wild desire;
If poets' words were fire
That burned to blood in purple-pulsing veins;
If with a bird-like thrill the moments throbbed to hours;
If summer's rains
Turned drop by drop to shy, sweet, maiden flowers;
If God made flowers with light and music in them,
And saddened hearts could win them;
If loosened petals touched the ground
With a caressing sound;
If love's eyes uttered word
No listening lover e'er before had heard;
If silent thoughts spake with a bugle's voice;
If flame passed into song and cried, «Rejoice! Rejoice!»
If words could picture life's, hope's, heaven's eclipse
When the last kiss has fallen on dying eyes and lips;
If all of mortal woe
Struck on one heart with breathless blow on blow;
If melody were tears, and tears were starry gleams
That shone in evening's amethystine dreams;
Ah yes, if notes were stars, each star a different hue,
Trembling to earth in dew;
Or if the boreal pulsings, rose and white,
Made a majestic music in the night;
If all the orbs lost in the light of day
In the deep, silent blue began their harps to play;
And when in frightening skies the lightnings flashed
And storm-clouds crashed,
If every stroke of light and sound were but excess of beauty;
If human syllables could e'er refashion
That fierce electric passion;
If other art could match (as were the poet's duty)
The grieving, and the rapture, and the thunder
Of that keen hour of wonder,—
That light as if of heaven, that blackness as of hell,—
How Paderewski plays then might I dare to tell.

II

How Paderewski plays! And was it he
Or some disbodied spirit which had rushed
From silence into singing; and had crushed

Into one startled hour a life's felicity,
And highest bliss of knowledge — that all life, grief, wrong,
Turn at the last to beauty and to song!

THE SONNET

What is a sonnet? 'Tis the pearly shell
That murmurs of the far-off murmuring sea;
A precious jewel carved most curiously;
It is a little picture painted well.
What is a sonnet? 'Tis the tear that fell
From a great poet's hidden ecstasy;
A two-edged sword, a star, a song — ah me!
Sometimes a heavy-tolling funeral bell.
This was the flame that shook with Dante's breath;
The solemn organ whereon Milton played,
And the clear glass where Shakespeare's shadow falls:
A sea this is — beware who ventureth!
For like a fiord the narrow floor is laid
Mid-ocean deep to the sheer mountain walls.

AMERICA

From 'The Great Remembrance'

Land that we love! Thou Future of the World!
Thou refuge of the noble heart oppressed!
Oh, never be thy shining image hurled
From its high place in the adoring breast
Of him who worships thee with jealous love!
Keep thou thy starry forehead as the dove
All white, and to the eternal Dawn inclined!
Thou art not for thyself, but for mankind,
And to despair of thee were to despair
Of man, of man's high destiny, of God!
Of thee should man despair, the journey trod
Upward, through unknown eons, stair on stair,
By this our race, with bleeding feet and slow,
Were but the pathway to a darker woe
Than yet was visioned by the heavy heart
Of prophet. To despair of thee! Ah no!
For thou thyself art Hope; Hope of the World thou art!

ON THE LIFE-MASK OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

This bronze doth keep the very form and mold
Of our great martyr's face. Yes, this is he:
That brow all wisdom, all benignity;
That human, humorous mouth; those cheeks that hold
Like some harsh landscape all the summer's gold;
That spirit fit for sorrow, as the sea
For storms to beat on; the lone agony
Those silent, patient lips too well foretold.
Yes, this is he who ruled a world of men
As might some prophet of the elder day—
Brooding above the tempest and the fray
With deep-eyed thought and more than mortal ken.
A power was his beyond the touch of art
Or armèd strength—his pure and mighty heart.

«CALL ME NOT DEAD»

Call me not dead when I, indeed, have gone
Into the company of the ever-living
High and most glorious poets! Let thanksgiving
Rather be made. Say:—«He at last hath won
Rest and release, converse supreme and wise,
Music and song and light of immortal faces;
To-day, perhaps, wandering in starry places,
He hath met Keats, and known him by his eyes.
To-morrow (who can say?) Shakespeare may pass,
And our lost friend just catch one syllable
Of that three-centuried wit that kept so well;
Or Milton; or Dante, looking on the grass
Thinking of Beatrice, and listening still
To chanted hymns that sound from the heavenly hill.»

AFTER-SONG

From ‹The New Day›

Through love to light! Oh, wonderful the way
That leads from darkness to the perfect day!
From darkness and from sorrow of the night
To morning that comes singing o'er the sea.
Through love to light! Through light, O God, to thee,
Who art the love of love, the eternal light of light!

GIUSEPPE GIUSTI

(1809–1850)

Giuseppe Giusti, an Italian satirical poet, was born of an influential family, May 12th, 1809, in the little village of Monsummano, which lies between Pistoja and Pescia, and was in every fibre of his nature a Tuscan. As a child he imbibed the healthful, sunny atmosphere of that Campagna, and grew up loving the world and his comrades, but with a dislike of study which convinced himself and his friends that he was born to no purpose. He was early destined to the bar, and began his law studies in Pistoja and Lucca, completing them a number of years later at Pisa, where he obtained his degree of doctor.

Giuseppe Giusti

In 1834 he went to Florence, under pretence of practicing with the advocate Capoquadri; but here as elsewhere he spent his time in the world of gayety, whose fascination and whose absurdity he seems to have felt with equal keenness. His dislike of study found its exception in his love of Dante, of whom he was a reverent student. He was himself continually versifying, and his early romantic lyrics are inspired by lofty thought. His penetrating humor, however, and his instinctive sarcasm, whose expression was never unkind, led him soon to abandon idealism and to distinguish himself in the field of satire, which has no purer representative than he. His compositions are short and terse, and are seldom blemished by personalities. He was wont to say that absurd persons did not merit even the fame of infamy. He leveled his wit against the lethargy and immoralities of the times, and revealed them clear-cut in the light of his own stern principles and patriotism.

The admiration and confidence which he now began to receive from the public was to him a matter almost of consternation, wont as he was to consider himself a good-for-nothing. He confesses somewhat bashfully however that there was always within him, half afraid of itself, an instinct of power which led him to say in his heart, Who knows what I may be with time? His frail constitution and almost incessant physical suffering account for a natural indolence against which he constantly inveighs, but above which he was powerless to rise except at vehement intervals. No carelessness, however, marks his work. He was a tireless reviser, and possessed the rare power of cutting, polishing, and finishing his work with exquisite nicety, without robbing it of vigor. His writings exerted a distinct political and moral influence. His is not alone the voice of pitiless and mocking irony, but it is that of the humanitarian, who in overthrow and destruction sees only the first step toward the creation of something better. When war broke out he laid aside his pen, saying that this was no time for a poet to pull down, and that his was not the power to build up. His health forbade his entering the army, which was a cause of poignant sorrow to him. His faith in Italy and her people and in the final triumph of unity remained unshaken and sublime in the midst of every reverse.

His mastery of the Tuscan dialect and his elegance of idiom won him membership in the Accademia della Crusca; but his love for Tuscany was always subservient to his love for Italy. To those who favored the division of the peninsula, he used to reply that he had but one fatherland, and that was a unit. He died in Florence, March 31, 1850, at the home of his devoted friend the Marquis Gino Capponi. In the teeth of Austrian prohibition, a throng of grateful and loving citizens followed his body to the church of San Miniato al Monte, remembering that at a time when freedom of thought was deemed treason, this man had fearlessly raised the battle-cry and prepared the way for the insurrection of 1848. Besides his satires, Giusti has left us a life of the poet Giuseppe Parini, a collection of Tuscan proverbs, and an unedited essay on the ‹Divine Comedy.›

LULLABY

From ‹Gingillino›

[The poem of ‹Gingillino,› one of Giusti's finest satires, is full of personal hits, greatly enjoyed by the author's countrymen. The ‹Lullaby› is sung by a number of personified Vices round the cradle of the infant Gingillino, who, having come into the world naked and possessed of nothing, is admonished how to behave if he would go out of it well dressed and rich. A few verses only are given out of the many. The whole poem was one of the most popular of all Giusti's satires.]

CRY not, dear baby,
Of nothing possessed;
But if thou wouldst, dear,
Expire well dressed . .

Let nothing vex thee,—
Love's silly story,

Ghosts of grand festivals
Spectres of glory;

Let naught annoy thee:
The burdens of fame,
The manifold perils
That wait on a name.

Content thyself, baby,
With learning to read:
Don't be vainglorious;
That's all thou canst need.

All promptings of genius
Confine in thy breast,
If thou wouldst, baby,
Expire well dressed. . . .

Let not God nor Devil
Concern thy poor wits,
And tell no more truth
Than politeness permits.

With thy soul and thy body,
Still worship the Real;
Nor ever attempt
To pursue the Ideal.

As for thy scruples,
Let them be suppressed,
If thou wouldst, baby,
Expire well dressed.

Translated for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature.›

THE STEAM-GUILLOTINE

[The monarch satirized in this poem was Francesco IV., Duke of Modena, a petty Nero, who executed not a few of the Italian patriots of 1831.]

A MOST wonderful steam-machine,
One time set up in China-land,
Outdid the insatiate guillotine,
For in three hours, you understand,
It cut off a hundred thousand heads
In a row, like hospital beds.

This innovation stirred a breeze,
And some of the bonzes even thought
Their barbarous country by degrees
To civilization might be brought,
Leaving Europeans, with their schools,
Looking like fools.

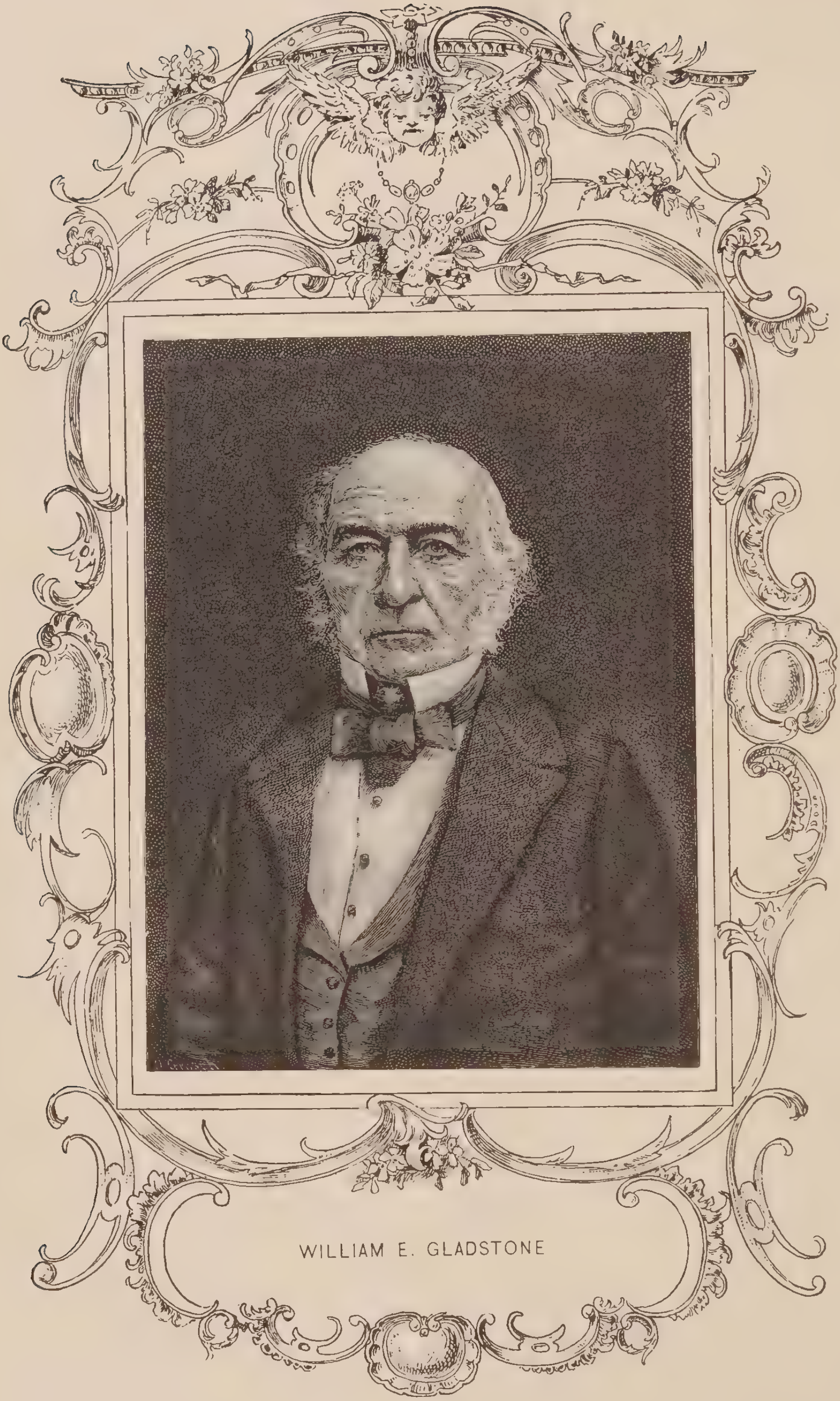
The Emperor was an honest man—
A little stiff, and dull of pate;
Like other asses, hard and slow.
He loved his subjects and the State,
And patronized all clever men
Within his ken.

His people did not like to pay
Their taxes and their other dues,—
They cheated the revenue, sad to say:
So their good ruler thought he'd choose
As the best argument he'd seen,
This sweet machine.

The thing's achievements were so great,
They gained a pension for the man,—
The executioner of State,—
Who got a patent for his plan,
Besides becoming a Mandarin
Of great Pekin.

A courtier cried: «Good guillotine!
Let's up and christen it, I say!»
«Ah, why,» cries to his counselor keen
A Nero of our present day,
«Why was not born within *my* State
A man so great?»

Translated for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature.›



WILLIAM E. GLADSTONE

WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE

(1809–)

In view of his distinguished career, it is interesting to know that it is a part of Mr. Gladstone's unresting ambition to take a place among the literary men of the time, and to guide the thoughts of his countrymen in literary as well as in political, social, and economic subjects. Mr. Gladstone's preparation to become a man of letters was extensive. Born in Liverpool December 29th, 1809, he was sent to Eton and afterwards to Oxford, where he took the highest honors, and was the most remarkable graduate of his generation. His fellow students carried away a vivid recollection of his *viva voce* examination for his degree: the tall figure, the flashing eye, the mobile countenance, in the midst of the crowd who pressed to hear him, while the examiners plied him with questions till, tested in some difficult point in theology, the candidate exclaimed, «Not yet, if you please!» and began to pour forth a fresh store of learning and argument.

From the university Mr. Gladstone carried away two passions—the one for Greek literature, especially Greek poetry, the other for Christian theology. The Oxford that formed these tastes was intensely conservative in politics, representing the aristocratic system of English society and the exclusiveness of the Established Church, whose creed was that of the fourth century. Ecclesiasticism is not friendly to literature; but how far Oxford's most loyal son was permeated by ecclesiasticism is a matter of opinion. Fortunately, personality is stronger than dogma, and ideas than literary form; and Mr. Gladstone, than whom few men outside the profession of letters have written more, is always sure of an intelligent hearing. His discussion of a subject seems to invest it with some of his own marvelous vitality; and when he selects a book for review, he is said to make the fortune of both publisher and author, if only the title be used as a crotchet to hang his sermon on.

And this not merely because curiosity is excited concerning the opinion of the greatest living Englishman (for notwithstanding his political vacillations, his views on inward and higher subjects have little changed since his Oxford days, and may easily be prognosticated), but on account of the subtlety and fertility of his mind and the adroitness of his argument. Plunging into the heart of the subject, he is at the same time working round it, holding it up for inspection in one light and then in another, reasoning from this premise and that; while the string of elucidations and explanations grows longer and longer, and the atmosphere of complexity thickens. It was out of such an atmosphere that a barrister advised his client, a bigamist, to get Mr. Gladstone to explain away one of his wives.

When Mr. Gladstone made his début as an author, he locked horns with Macaulay in the characteristic paper ‘Church and State’ (1837). He published his ‘Studies in Homer and the Homeric Age’ in 1858, ‘Juventus Mundi’ in 1869, ‘Homeric Synchronism’ in 1857. In 1879 most of his essays, political, social, economic, religious, and literary, written between 1843 and 1879, were collected in seven volumes, and appeared under the title of ‘Gleanings of Past Years.’ He has published a very great number of smaller writings not reprinted.

From that time to the present, neither his industry nor his energy has abated; but he is probably at his best in the several remarkable essays on Blanco White, Bishop Patterson, Tennyson, Leopardi, and the position of the Church of England. The reader spoiled for the Scotch quality of weight by the «light touch» which is the graceful weapon of the age, wonders, when reading these essays, that Mr. Gladstone has not more assiduously cultivated the instinct of style,—sentence-making. Milton himself has not a higher conception of the business of literature; and when discussing these congenial themes, Mr. Gladstone's enthusiasm does not degenerate into vehemence, nor does he descend from the high moral plane from which he views the world.

It is the province of the specialist to appraise Mr. Gladstone's Homeric writings; but even the specialist will not, perhaps, forbear to quote the axiom of the pugilist in the Iliad concerning the fate of him who would be skillful in all arts. No man is less a Greek in temperament, but no man cherishes deeper admiration for the Greek genius, and nowhere else is a more vivid picture of the life and politics of the heroic age held up to the unlearned. While the critic may question technical accuracy, or plausible structures built on insufficient data, the laity will remember how earnestly Mr. Gladstone insists that Homer is his own best interpreter, and that the student of the Iliad must go to the Greek text and not elsewhere for accurate knowledge.

But Greek literature is only one of Mr. Gladstone's two passions, and not the paramount one. That he would have been a great theologian had he been other than Mr. Gladstone, is generally admitted. And it is interesting to note that while he glories in the combats of the heroes of Hellas, his enthusiasm is as quickly kindled by the humilities of the early Church. He recognizes the prophetic quality of Homer, but he bows before the sublimer genius of an Isaiah, and sees in the lives and writings of the early Fathers the perfect bloom of human genius and character.

MACAULAY

From ‹Gleanings of Past Years›

Lord Macaulay lived a life of no more than fifty-nine years and three months. But it was an extraordinarily full life, of sustained exertion; a high table-land, without depressions. If in its outer aspect there be anything wearisome, it is only the wearisomeness of reiterated splendors, and of success so uniform as to be almost monotonous. He speaks of himself as idle; but his idleness was more active, and carried with it hour by hour a greater expenditure of brain power, than what most men regard as their serious employments. He might well have been, in his mental career, the spoiled child of fortune; for all he tried succeeded, all he touched turned into gems and gold. In a happy childhood he evinced extreme precocity. His academical career gave sufficient, though not redundant, promise of after celebrity. The new Golden Age he imparted to the Edinburgh Review, and his first and most important, if not best, Parliamentary speeches in the grand crisis of the first Reform Bill, achieved for him, years before he had reached the middle point of life, what may justly be termed an immense distinction.

For a century and more, perhaps no man in this country, with the exceptions of Mr. Pitt and of Lord Byron, had attained at thirty-two the fame of Macaulay. His Parliamentary success and his literary eminence were each of them enough, as they stood at this date, to intoxicate any brain and heart of a meaner order. But to these was added, in his case, an amount and quality of social attentions such as invariably partake of adulation and idolatry, and as perhaps the high circles of London never before or since have lavished on a man whose claims lay only in himself, and not in his descent, his rank, or his possessions. . . .

One of the very first things that must strike the observer of this man is, that he was very unlike to any other man. And yet this unlikeness, this monopoly of the model in which he was made, did not spring from violent or eccentric features of originality, for eccentricity he had none whatever, but from the peculiar mode in which the ingredients were put together to make up the composition. In one sense, beyond doubt, such powers as his famous memory, his rare power of illustration, his command of language, separated him broadly from others: but gifts like these do not make the man; and we now for the first time know that he possessed, in a far larger sense, the stamp of a real and strong individuality. The most splendid and complete assemblage of intellectual endowments does not of itself suffice to create an interest of the kind that is, and will be, now felt in Macaulay. It is from ethical gifts alone that such an interest can spring.

These existed in him not only in abundance, but in forms distant from and even contrasted with the fashion of his intellectual faculties, and in conjunctions which come near to paradox. Behind the mask of splendor lay a singular simplicity; behind a literary severity which sometimes approached to vengeance, an extreme tenderness; behind a rigid repudiation of the sentimental, a sensibility at all times quick, and in the latest times almost threatening to sap, though never sapping, his manhood. He who as speaker and writer seemed above all others to represent the age and the world, had the real centre of his being in the simplest domestic tastes and joys. He for whom the mysteries of human life, thought, and destiny appear to have neither charm nor terror, and whose writings seem audibly to boast in every page of being bounded by the visible horizon of the practical and work-day sphere, yet in his virtues and in the combination of them; in his freshness, bounty, bravery; in his unshrinking devotion both to causes and to persons; and most of all, perhaps, in the thoroughly inborn and spontaneous character of all these gifts,—really recalls the age of chivalry and the lineaments of the ideal. The peculiarity, the *differentia* (so to speak) of Macaulay seems to us to lie in this: that while as we frankly think, there is much to question—nay, much here and there to regret or even censure—in his writings, the excess, or defect, or whatever it may be, is never really ethical, but is in all cases due to something in the structure and habits of his intellect. And again, it is pretty plain that the faults of that intellect were immediately associated with its excellences: it was in some sense, to use the language of his own Milton, «dark with excessive bright.» . . .

His moderation in luxuries and pleasures is the more notable and praiseworthy because he was a man who, with extreme healthiness of faculty, enjoyed keenly what he enjoyed at all. Take in proof the following hearty notice of a dinner *a quattr' occhi* to his friend: «Ellis came to dinner at seven. I gave him a lobster curry, woodcock, and macaroni. I think that I will note dinners, as honest Pepys did.»

His love of books was intense, and was curiously developed. In a walk he would devour a play or a volume. Once, indeed, his performance embraced no less than fourteen Books of the Odyssey. «His way of life,» says Mr. Trevelyan, «would have been deemed solitary by others; but it was not solitary to him.» This development blossomed into a peculiar specialism. Henderson's ‹Iceland› was «a favorite breakfast-book» with him. «Some books which I would never dream of opening at dinner please me at breakfast, and *vice versâ!*» There is more subtlety in this distinction than could easily be found in any passage of his writings. But how quietly both meals are handed over to the dominion of the master propensity! This devotion, however, was not without its drawbacks. Thought, apart from books and from composition, perhaps he disliked; certainly he eschewed. Crossing that evil-minded sea the Irish Channel at night in rough weather, he is disabled from reading; he wraps himself in a pea-jacket and sits upon the deck. What is his employment? He cannot sleep, or does not. What an opportunity for moving onward in the processes of thought, which ought to weigh on the historian! The wild yet soothing music of the waves would have helped him to watch the verging this way or that of the judicial scales, or to dive into the problems of human life and action which history continually is called upon to sound. No, he cared for none of this. He set about the marvelous feat of going over ‹Paradise Lost› from memory, when he found he could still repeat half of it. In a word, he was always conversing, or recollecting, or reading, or composing; but reflecting never.

The laboriousness of Macaulay as an author demands our gratitude; all the more because his natural speech was in sentences of set and ordered structure, well-nigh ready for the press. It is delightful to find that the most successful prose writer of the day was also the most painstaking. Here is indeed a literary conscience. The very same gratification may be expressed with reference to our most successful poet, Mr. Tennyson.

Great is the praise due to the poet; still greater, from the nature of the case, that share which falls to the lot of Macaulay. For a poet's diligence is, all along, a honeyed work. He is ever traveling in flowery meads. Macaulay, on the other hand, unshrinkingly went through an immense mass of inquiry, which even he sometimes felt to be irksome, and which to most men would have been intolerable. He was perpetually picking the grain of corn out of the bushel of chaff. He freely chose to undergo the dust and heat and strain of battle, before he would challenge from the public the crown of victory. And in every way it was remarkable that he should maintain his lofty standard of conception and performance. Mediocrity is now, as formerly, dangerous, commonly fatal, to the poet; but among even the successful writers of prose, those who rise sensibly above it are the very rarest exceptions. The tests of excellence in prose are as much less palpable as the public appetite is less fastidious. Moreover, we are moving downward in this respect. The proportion of middling to good writing constantly and rapidly increases. With the average of performance, the standard of judgment progressively declines. The inexorable conscientiousness of Macaulay, his determination to put out nothing from his hand which his hand was still capable of improving, was a perfect godsend to the best hopes of our slipshod generation.

It was naturally consequent upon this habit of treating composition in the spirit of art, that he should extend to the body of his books much of the regard and care which he so profusely bestowed upon their soul. We have accordingly had in him, at the time when the need was greatest, a most vigilant guardian of the language. We seem to detect rare and slight evidences of carelessness in his Journal: of which we can only say that in a production of the moment, written for himself alone, we are surprised that they are not more numerous and considerable. In general society, carelessness of usage is almost universal, and it is exceedingly difficult for an individual, however vigilant, to avoid catching some of the trashy or faulty usages which are continually in his ear. But in his published works his grammar, his orthography, nay, his punctuation (too often surrendered to the printer), are faultless. On these questions, and on the lawfulness or unlawfulness of a word, he may even be called an authority without appeal; and we cannot doubt that we owe it to his works, and to their boundless circulation, that we have not in this age witnessed a more rapid corruption and degeneration of the language.

To the literary success of Macaulay it would be difficult to find a parallel in the history of recent authorship. For this and probably for all future centuries, we are to regard the public as the patron of literary men; and as a patron abler than any that went before to heap both fame and fortune on its favorites. Setting aside works of which the primary purpose was entertainment, Tennyson alone among the writers of our age, in point of public favor and of emolument following upon it, comes near to Macaulay. But Tennyson was laboriously cultivating his gifts for many years before he acquired a position in the eye of the nation. Macaulay, fresh from college in 1825, astonished the world by his brilliant and most imposing essay on Milton. Full-orbed, he was seen above the horizon; and full-orbed after thirty-five years of constantly emitted splendor, he sank beneath it.

His gains from literature were extraordinary. The check for £20,000 is known to all. But his accumulation was reduced by his bounty; and his profits would, it is evident, have been far larger still had he dealt with the products of his mind on the principles of economic science (which however he heartily professed), and sold his wares in the dearest market, as he undoubtedly acquired them in the cheapest. No one can measure the elevation of Macaulay's character above the mercenary level, without bearing in mind that for ten years after 1825 he was a poor and a contented man, though ministering to the wants of a father and a family reduced in circumstances; though in the blaze of literary and political success; and though he must have been conscious from the first of the possession of a gift which by a less congenial and more compulsory use would have rapidly led him to opulence. Yet of the comforts and advantages, both social and physical, from which he thus forbore, it is so plain that he at all times formed no misanthropic or ascetic, but on the contrary a very liberal and genial estimate. It is truly touching to find that never, except as a minister, until 1851, when he had already lived fifty years of his fifty-nine, did this favorite of fortune, this idol of society, allow himself the luxury of a carriage.

It has been observed that neither in art nor letters did Macaulay display that faculty of the higher criticism which depends upon certain refined perceptions and the power of subtle analysis.

His analysis was always rough, hasty, and sweeping, and his perceptions robust. By these properties it was that he was so eminently φορτικός, not in the vulgar sense of an appeal to spurious sentiment, but as one bearing his reader along by violence, as the River Scamander tried to bear Achilles. Yet he was never pretentious; and he said frankly of himself that a criticism like that of Lessing in his 'Laocoön,' or of Goethe on 'Hamlet,' filled him with wonder and despair. His intense devotion to the great work of Dante is not perhaps in keeping with the general tenor of his tastes and attachments, but is in itself a circumstance of much interest.

We remember however at least one observation of Macaulay's in regard to art, which is worth preserving. He observed that the mixture of gold with ivory in great works of ancient art — for example, in the Jupiter of Phidias — was probably a condescension to the tastes of the people who were to be the worshipers of the statue; and he noticed that in Christian times it has most rarely happened that productions great in art have also been the objects of warm popular veneration. . . .

It has been felt and pointed out in many quarters that Macaulay as a writer was the child, and became the type, of his country and his age. As fifty years ago the inscription «Bath» used to be carried on our letter-paper, so the word «English» is, as it were, in the water-mark of every leaf of Macaulay's writing. His country was not the Empire, nor was it the United Kingdom. It was not even Great Britain. Though he was descended in the higher, that is the paternal, half from Scottish ancestry, and was linked specially with that country through the signal virtues, the victorious labors, and the considerable reputation of his father Zachary,— his country was England. On this little spot he concentrated a force of admiration and of worship which might have covered all the world. But as in space, so in time, it was limited. It was the England of his own age.

The higher energies of his life were as completely summed up in the present as those of Walter Scott were projected upon the past. He would not have filled an Abbotsford with armor and relics of the Middle Ages. He judges the men and institutions and events of other times by the instruments and measures of the present. The characters whom he admires are those who would have conformed to the type that was before his eyes: who would have moved with effect in the court, the camp, the senate, the drawing-room of to-day. He contemplates the past with no *desiderium*, no regretful longing, no sense of things admirable which are also lost and irrecoverable. Upon this limitation of his retrospects it follows in natural sequence that of the future he has no glowing anticipations, and even the present he is not apt to contemplate on its mysterious and ideal side. As in respect to his personal capacity of loving, so in regard to the corresponding literary power. The faculty was singularly intense, and yet it was spent within a narrow circle. There is a marked sign of this narrowness, in his disinclination even to look at the works of contemporaries whose tone or manner he disliked.

It appears that this dislike, and the ignorance consequent upon it, applied to the works of Carlyle. Now, we may have much or little faith in Carlyle as a philosopher or as a historian. Half-lights and half-truths may be the utmost which, in these departments, his works will be found to yield. But the total want of sympathy is the more noteworthy, because the resemblances, though partial, are both numerous and substantial between these two remarkable men and powerful writers, as well in their strength as in their weakness. Both are honest; and both, notwithstanding honesty, are partisans. Each is vastly, though diversely, powerful in expression; and each is more powerful in expression than in thought. Both are, though variously, poets using the vehicle of prose. Both have the power of portraitures, extraordinary for vividness and strength. For comprehensive disquisition, for balanced and impartial judgments, the world will probably resort to neither; and if Carlyle gains on the comparison in his strong sense of the inward and the ideal, he loses in the absolute and violent character of his one-sidedness. Without doubt, Carlyle's licentious though striking peculiarities of style have been of a nature allowably to repel, so far as they go, one who was so rigid as Macaulay in his literary orthodoxy, and who so highly appreciated, and with such expenditure of labor, all that relates to the exterior or body of a book. Still, if there be resemblances so strong, the want of appreciation, which has possibly been reciprocal, seems to be partly of that nature which Aristotle would have explained by his favorite proverb, *κεραμεὺς κεραμεῖ*.* The discrepancy is like the discrepancy of colors that are too near. Carlyle is at least a great fact in the literature of his time, and has contributed largely,—in some respects too largely,—toward forming its characteristic habits of thought. But on these very grounds he should not have been excluded from the horizon of a mind like Macaulay's, with all its large and varied and most active interests. . . .

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* Potter [detests] potter.

There have been other men of our own generation, though very few, who if they have not equaled have approached Macaulay in power of memory, and who have certainly exceeded him in the unfailing accuracy of their recollections; and yet not in accuracy as to dates or names or quotations, or other matters of hard fact, when the question was one simply between ay and no. In these he may have been without a rival. In a list of kings, or popes, or senior wranglers, or prime ministers, or battles, or palaces, or as to the houses in Pall Mall or about Leicester Square, he might be followed with implicit confidence. But a large and important class of human recollections are not of this order: recollections for example of characters, of feelings, of opinions; of the intrinsic nature, details, and bearings of occurrences. And here it was that Macaulay's wealth "was unto him an occasion of falling." And that in two ways. First, the possessor of such a vehicle as his memory could not but have something of an overweening confidence in what it told him; and quite apart from any tendency to be vain or overbearing, he could hardly enjoy the benefits of that caution which arises from self-interest, and the sad experience of frequent falls. But what is more, the possessor of so powerful a fancy could not but illuminate with the colors it supplied, the matters which he gathered into his great magazine, wherever the definiteness of their outline was not so rigid as to defy or disarm the action of the intruding and falsifying faculty. Imagination could not alter the date of the battle of Marathon, of the Council of Nice, or the crowning of Pepin; but it might seriously or even fundamentally disturb the balance of light and dark in his account of the opinions of Milton or of Laud, or his estimate of the effects of the Protectorate or the Restoration, or of the character and even the adulteries of William III. He could detect justly this want of dry light in others; he probably suspected it in himself; but it was hardly possible for him to be enough upon his guard against the distracting action of a faculty at once so vigorous, so crafty, and so pleasurable in its intense activity.

Hence arose, it seems reasonable to believe, that charge of partisanship against Macaulay as a historian, on which much has been and probably much more will be said. He may not have possessed that scrupulously tender sense of obligation, that nice tact of exact justice, which is among the very rarest as well as the most precious of human virtues. But there never was a writer less capable of intentional unfairness. This during his lifetime was the belief of his friends, but was hardly admitted by opponents. His biographer has really lifted the question out of the range of controversy. He wrote for truth, but of course for truth such as he saw it; and his sight was colored from within. This color, once attached, was what in manufacture is called a mordant; it was a fast color: he could not distinguish between what his mind had received and what his mind had imparted. Hence, when he was wrong, he could not see that he was wrong; and of those calamities which are due to the intellect only, and not the heart, there can hardly be a greater. . . .

However true it may be that Macaulay was a far more consummate workman in the manner than in the matter of his works, we do not doubt that the works contain, in multitudes, passages of high emotion and ennobling sentiment, just awards of praise and blame, and solid expositions of principle, social, moral, and constitutional. They are pervaded by a generous love of liberty; and their atmosphere is pure and bracing, their general aim and basis morally sound. Of the qualifications of this eulogy we have spoken, and have yet to speak. But we can speak of the style of the works with little qualification. We do not indeed venture to assert that his style ought to be imitated. Yet this is not because it was vicious, but because it was individual and incommunicable. It was one of those gifts of which, when it had been conferred, Nature broke the mold. That it is the head of all literary styles we do not allege; but it is different from them all, and perhaps more different from them all than they are usually different from one another. We speak only of natural styles, of styles where the manner waits upon the matter, and not where an artificial structure has been reared either to hide or to make up for poverty of substance.

It is paramount in the union of ease in movement with perspicuity of matter, of both with real splendor, and of all with immense rapidity and striking force. From any other pen, such masses of ornament would be tawdry; with him they are only rich. As a model of art concealing art, the finest cabinet pictures of Holland are almost his only rivals. Like Pascal, he makes the heaviest subject light; like Burke, he embellishes the barrenest. When he walks over arid plains, the springs of milk and honey, as in a march of Bacchus, seem to rise beneath his tread. The repast he serves is always sumptuous, but it seems to create an appetite proportioned to its abundance; for who has ever heard of the reader that was cloyed with Macaulay? In none, perhaps, of our prose writers are lessons such as he gives of truth and beauty, of virtue and of freedom, so vividly associated with delight. Could some magician but do for the career of life what he has done for the arm-chair and the study, what a change would pass on the face (at least) of the world we live in, what an accession of recruits would there be to the professing followers of virtue! . . .

The truth is that Macaulay was not only accustomed, like many more of us, to go out hobby-riding, but from the portentous vigor of the animal he mounted was liable more than most of us to be run away with. His merit is that he could keep his seat in the wildest steeple-chase; but as the object in view is arbitrarily chosen, so it is reached by cutting up the fields, spoiling the crops, and spoiling or breaking down the fences needful to secure for labor its profit, and to man at large the full enjoyment of the fruits of the earth. Such is the overpowering glow of color, such the fascination of the grouping in the first sketches which he draws, that when he has grown hot upon his work he seems to lose all sense of the restraints of fact and the laws of moderation; he vents the strangest paradoxes, sets up the most violent caricatures, and handles the false weight and measure as effectively as if he did it knowingly. A man so able and so upright is never indeed wholly wrong. He never for a moment consciously pursues anything but truth. But truth depends, above all, on proportion and relation. The preterhuman vividness with which Macaulay sees his object, absolutely casts a shadow upon what lies around; he loses his perspective; and imagination, impelled headlong by the strong consciousness of honesty in purpose, achieves the work of fraud. All things for him stand in violent contrast to one another. For the shadows, the gradations, the middle and transition touches, which make up the bulk of human life, character, and action, he has neither eye nor taste. They are not taken account of in his practice, and they at length die away from the ranges of his vision.

In Macaulay all history is scenic; and philosophy he scarcely seems to touch, except on the outer side, where it opens into action. Not only does he habitually present facts in forms of beauty, but the fashioning of the form predominates over, and is injurious to, the absolute and balanced presentation of the subject. Macaulay was a master in execution, rather than in what painting or music terms expression. He did not fetch from the depths, nor soar to the heights; but his power upon the surface was rare and marvelous, and it is upon the surface that an ordinary life is passed and that its imagery is found. He mingled, then, like Homer, the functions of the poet and the chronicler: but what Homer did was due to his time; what Macaulay did, to his temperament.

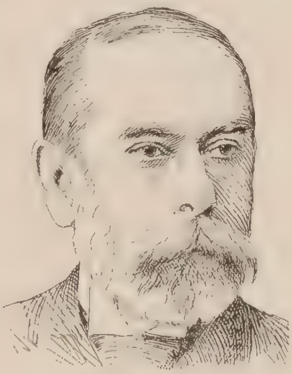
The 'History' of Macaulay, whatever else it may be, is the work not of a journeyman but of a great artist, and a great artist who lavishly bestowed upon it all his powers. Such a work, once committed to the press, can hardly die. It is not because it has been translated into a crowd of languages, nor because it has been sold in hundreds of thousands, that we believe it will live; but because, however open it may be to criticism, it has in it the character of a true and very high work of art. . . .

Whether he will subsist as a standard and supreme authority is another question. Wherever and whenever read, he will be read with fascination, with delight, with wonder. And with copious instruction too; but also with copious reserve, with questioning scrutiny, with liberty to reject and with much exercise of that liberty. The contemporary mind may in rare cases be taken by storm; but posterity, never. The tribunal of the present is accessible to influence; that of the future is incorrupt. The coming generations will not give Macaulay up; but they will probably attach much less value than we have done to his *ipse dixit.* They will hardly accept from him his net solutions of literary, and still less of historic problems. Yet they will obtain, from his marked and telling points of view, great aid in solving them. We sometimes fancy that ere long there will be editions of his works in which his readers may be saved from pitfalls by brief, respectful, and judicious commentary; and that his great achievements may be at once commemorated and corrected by men of slower pace, of drier light, and of more tranquil, broad-set, and comprehensive judgment. For his works are in many respects among the prodigies of literature; in some, they have never been surpassed. As lights that have shone through the whole universe of letters, they have made their title to a place in the solid firmament of fame. But the tree is greater and better than its fruit; and greater and better yet than the works themselves are the lofty aims and conceptions, the large heart, the independent, manful mind, the pure and noble career, which in this Biography have disclosed to us the true figure of the man who wrote them.

EDWIN LAWRENCE GODKIN

(1831–)

Among the men in the United States who through the agency of the press have molded intelligent public opinion, Edwin Lawrence Godkin deserves an honorable place. In the columns of the New York Nation and the New York Evening Post, he has for a generation given editorial utterance to his views upon economic, civic, political, and international questions, this work being supplemented by occasional incisive and scholarly articles in the best periodicals. His clientèle has been drawn mainly from that powerful minority which is made up of the educated, thoughtful men and women of the country. To this high function Mr. Godkin has contributed exceptional gifts and qualifications; and that in its exercise he has been a force for good, is beyond dispute.


Edwin L. Godkin

Born in Moyne, Ireland, in 1831, he was educated at Queen's College, Belfast. Then came the more practical education derived from a familiarity with men and things, for in early manhood he began newspaper work as war correspondent, in Turkey and the Crimea, of the London Daily News. As correspondent of this paper he came to the United States and settled here, being admitted to the New York bar in 1858. But journalism was to be his life work; and in 1865 he became the editor of The Nation, a weekly,—succeeding the Round Table, but at once taking a much more important place as a journal of political and literary discussion,—and the next year its proprietor. In 1881 he also became one of the owners and the controlling editor of the New York Evening Post, a daily, and his contributions since then have appeared in both papers, which bear to each other the relation of a daily and weekly edition. Thus he has been in active journalistic service for more than thirty years.

From this slight biographical outline it may be seen that Mr. Godkin brought to the pursuit of his profession and to the study of American institutions some valuable qualifications. A college-bred man of wide experience, an adoptive American able to judge by the comparative method, a careful student of the philosophy of government, from Aristotle to Sir Henry Maine, his views combine in an unusual degree the practical and the theoretical. No doubt he has in his writings what to some will seem the defect of his quality. There is in him a certain haughtiness of temper, and what seems like impatient contempt for the opponent in argument, which, conjoined with a notable power of invective and satire in dealing with what he deems to be fallacious, are likely to arouse opposition. Hence the feeling in some quarters that Mr. Godkin is not at heart an American, but a captious critic, with sympathies ill suited to a democratic government.

This opinion is not justified by a fair examination of his writings. He has on the contrary and in the true sense proved himself a true American. He has spoken wise words upon many of the social and political problems of our day. He has defended democracy from the charge of failure, pointing out that here in the United States social defects, wrongly ascribed by foreign critics to the form of government, have been incidental to the settling of a vast new country. He has stated with clearness and cogency the inadvisability of allowing the government paternal power in finance and tariff legislation. He has preached the difference between cheap jingoism or political partisanship, and the enlightened Americanism which puts its finger upon weak points, criticizing in order to correct and purify. Mr. Godkin, in this, has been a consistent worker in a cause of which Lowell was a noble prophet. And in regard of literary excellence, his editorial writing is often a model of lucid, sinewy English style; while his more deliberated essays have been admirable for calm dignity, polish, and organic exposition, with an air of good breeding over it all. The influence of such a man, both as writer and thinker, especially in a land like the United States, has been most salutary.

THE DUTY OF CRITICISM IN A DEMOCRACY

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No intelligent man can or ought to ignore the part which hope of better things plays in our present social system. It has largely, among the working classes, taken the place of religious belief. They have brought their heaven down to earth, and are literally looking forward to a sort of New Jerusalem, in which all comforts and many of the luxuries of life will be within easy reach of all. The great success of Utopian works like Bellamy's shows the hold which these ideas have taken of the popular mind. The world has to have a religion of some kind, and the hope of better food and clothing, more leisure, and a greater variety of amusements, has become the religion of the working classes. Hope makes them peaceful, industrious, and resigned under present suffering. A Frenchman saw a ragged pauper spend his last few cents on a lottery ticket, and asked him how he could commit such a folly. « In order to have something to hope for,» he said. And from this point of view the outlay was undoubtedly excusable. It is literally hope which makes the world go round, and one of the hardest things an educated man who opens his mouth about public affairs has to do, is to say one word or anything to dampen or destroy it. Yet his highest duty is to speak the truth.

Luckily, there is one truth which can always be spoken without offense, and that is that on the whole the race advances through the increase of intelligence and the improvement of character, and has not advanced in any other way. The great amelioration in the condition of the working classes in Europe within this century, including the increasing power of the trades-unions, is the result not of any increase of benevolence in the upper classes, but of the growth of knowledge and self-reliance and foresight among the working classes themselves. The changes in legislation which have improved their condition are changes which they have demanded. When a workingman becomes a capitalist, and raises himself in any way above his early condition, it is rarely the result of miracle or accident. It is due to his superior intelligence and thrift. Nothing, on the whole, can be more delusive than official and other inquiries into the labor problem through commissions and legislative committees. They all assume that there is some secret in the relations of labor and capital which can be found out by taking testimony. But they never find anything out. Their reports during the last fifty years would make a small library, but they never tell us anything new. They are meant to pacify and amuse the laborer, and they do so; but to their constant failure to do anything more we owe some of the Socialist movement. The Socialists believe this failure due to want of will, and that Karl Marx has discovered the great truth of the situation, which is, that labor is entitled to the whole product. The great law which Nature seems to have prescribed for the government of the world, and the only law of human society which we are able to extract from history, is that the more intelligent and thoughtful of the race shall inherit the earth and have the best time, and that all others shall find life on the whole dull and unprofitable. Socialism is an attempt to contravene this law and insure a good time to everybody, independently of character and talents; but Nature will see that she is not frustrated or brought to naught, and I do not think educated men should ever cease to call attention to this fact; that is, ever cease to preach hopefulness, not to everybody, but to good people. This is no bar to benevolence to bad people or any people; but our first duty is loyalty to the great qualities of our kind, to the great human virtues which raise the civilized man above the savage.

There is probably no government in the world to-day as stable as that of the United States. The chief advantage of democratic government is, in a country like this, the enormous force it can command on an emergency. By «emergency» I mean the suppression of an insurrection or the conduct of a foreign war. But it is not equally strong in the ordinary work of administration. A good many governments, by far inferior to it in strength, fill the offices, collect the taxes, administer justice, and do the work of legislation with much greater efficiency. One cause of this inefficiency is that the popular standard in such matters is low, and that it resents dissatisfaction as an assumption of superiority. When a man says these and those things ought not to be, his neighbors, who find no fault with them, naturally accuse him of giving himself airs. It seems as if he thought he knew more than they did, and was trying to impose his plans on them. The consequence is that in a land of pure equality, as this is, critics are always an unpopular class, and criticism is in some sense an odious work. The only condemnation passed on the governmental acts or systems is apt to come from the opposite party in the form of what is called «arraignment,» which generally consists in wholesale abuse of the party in power, treating all their acts, small or great, as due to folly or depravity, and all their public men as either fools or knaves. Of course this makes but small impression on the public mind. It is taken to indicate not so much a desire to improve the public service as to get hold of the offices, and has as a general rule but little effect. Parties lose their hold on power through some conspicuously obnoxious acts or failures; never, or very rarely, through the judgments passed on them by hostile writers or orators. And yet nothing is more necessary to successful government than abundant criticism from sources not open to the suspicion of particular interest. There is nothing which bad governments so much dislike and resent as criticism, and have in past ages taken so much pains to put down. In fact, a history of the civil liberty would consist largely of an account of the resistance to criticism on the part of rulers. One of the first acts of a successful tyranny or despotism is always the silencing of the press or the establishment of a censorship.

Popular objection to criticism is however senseless, because it is through criticism — that is, through discrimination between two things, customs, or courses — that the race has managed to come out of the woods and lead a civilized life. The first man who objected to the general nakedness, and advised his fellows to put on clothes, was the first critic. Criticism of a high tariff recommends a low tariff; criticism of monarchy recommends a republic; criticism of vice recommends virtue. In fact, almost every act of life, in the practice of a profession or the conduct of a business, condemns one course and suggests another. The word means *judging*, and judgment is the highest of the human faculties, the one which most distinguishes us from the animals.

There is probably nothing from which the public service of the country suffers more to-day than the silence of its educated class; that is, the small amount of criticism which comes from the disinterested and competent sources. It is a very rare thing for an educated man to say anything publicly about the questions of the day. He is absorbed in science, or art, or literature, in the practice of his profession, or in the conduct of his business; and if he has any interest at all in public affairs, it is a languid one. He is silent because he does not much care, or because he does not wish to embarrass the administration or «hurt the party,» or because he does not feel that anything he could say would make much difference. So that on the whole, it is very rarely that the instructed opinion of the country is ever heard on any subject. The report of the Bar Association on the nomination of Maynard in New York was a remarkable exception to this rule. Some improvement in this direction has been made by the appearance of the set of people known as the «Mugwumps,» who are, in the main, men of cultivation. They have been defined in various ways. They are known to the masses mainly as «kickers»; that is, dissatisfied, querulous people, who complain of everybody and cannot submit to party discipline. But they are the only critics who do not criticize in the interest of party, but simply in that of good government. They are a kind of personage whom the bulk of the voters know nothing about and find it difficult to understand, and consequently load with ridicule and abuse. But their movement, though its visible recognizable effects on elections may be small, has done inestimable service in slackening the bonds of party discipline, in making the expression of open dissent from party programmes respectable and common, and in increasing the unreliable vote in large States like New York. It is of the last importance that this unreliable vote — that is, the vote which party leaders cannot count on with certainty — should be large in such States. The mere fear of it prevents a great many excesses.

But in criticism one always has hard work in steering a straight course between optimism and pessimism. These are the Scylla and Charybdis of the critic's career. Almost every man who thinks or speaks about public affairs is either an optimist or a pessimist; which he is, depends a good deal on temperament, but often on character. The political jobber or corruptionist is almost always an optimist. So is the prosperous business man. So is nearly every politician, because the optimist is nearly always the more popular of the two. As a general rule, people like cheerful men and the promise of good times. The kill-joy and bearer of bad news has always been an odious character. But for the cultivated man there is no virtue in either optimism or pessimism. Some people think it a duty to be optimistic, and for some people it may be a duty; but one of the great uses of education is to teach us to be neither one nor the other. In the management of our personal affairs, we try to be neither one nor the other. In business, a persistent and uproarious optimist would certainly have poor credit. And why? Because in business the trustworthy man, as everybody knows, is the man who sees things as they are: and to see things as they are, without glamor or illusion, is the first condition of worldly success. It is absolutely essential in war, in finance, in law, in every field of human activity in which the future has to be thought of and provided for. It is just as essential in politics. The only reason why it is not thought as essential in politics is, the punishment for failure or neglect comes in politics more slowly.

The pessimist has generally a bad name, but there is a good deal to be said for him. To take a recent illustration, the man who took pessimistic views of the silver movement was for nearly twenty years under a cloud. This gloomy anticipation of 1873 was not realized until 1893. For a thousand years after Marcus Aurelius, the pessimist, if I may use the expression, was "cock of the walk." He certainly has no reason to be ashamed of his rôle in the Eastern world for a thousand years after the Mohammedan Hegira. In Italy and Spain he has not needed to hang his head since the Renaissance. In fact, if we take various nations and long reaches of time, we shall find that the gloomy man has been nearly as often justified by the course of events as the cheerful one. Neither of them has any special claim to a hearing on public affairs. A persistent optimist, although he may be a most agreeable man in family life, is likely, in business or politics, to be just as foolish and unbearable as a persistent pessimist. He is as much out of harmony with the order of nature. The universe is not governed on optimistic any more than on pessimistic principles. The best and wisest of men make their mistakes and have their share of sorrow and sickness and losses. So also the most happily situated nations must suffer from internal discord, the blunders of statesmen, and the madness of the people. What Cato said in the Senate of the conditions of success, "vigilando, agendo, bene consulendo, prosperê omnia cedunt," is as true to-day as it was two thousand years ago. We must remember that though the optimist may be the pleasantest man to have about us, he is the least likely to take precautions; that is, the least likely to watch and work for success. We owe a great deal of our slovenly legislation to his presence in large numbers in Congress and the legislatures. The great suffering through which we are now passing, in consequence of the persistence in our silver purchases, is the direct result of unreasoning optimism. Its promoters disregarded the warnings of economists and financiers because they believed that somehow, they did not know how, the thing would come out right in the end. The silver collapse, together with the Civil War over slavery, are striking illustrations to occur in one century, of the fact that if things come out right in the end, it is often after periods of great suffering and disaster. Could people have foreseen how the slavery controversy would end, what frantic efforts would have been made for peaceful abolition! Could people have foreseen the panic of last year, with its wide-spread disaster, what haste would have been made to stop the silver purchases! And yet the experience of mankind afforded abundant reason for anticipating both results.

This leads me to say that the reason why educated men should try and keep a fair mental balance between both pessimism and optimism, is that there has come over the world in the last twenty-five or thirty years a very great change of opinion touching the relations of the government to the community. When Europe settled down to peaceful work after the great wars of the French Revolution, it was possessed with the idea that the freedom of the individual was all that was needed for public prosperity and private happiness. The old government interference with people's movements and doings was supposed to be the reason why nations had not been happy in the past. This became the creed, in this country, of the Democratic party, which came into existence after the foundation of the federal government. At the same time there grew up here the popular idea of the American character, in which individualism was the most marked trait. If you are not familiar with it in your own time, you may remember it in the literature of the earlier half of the century. The typical American was always the architect of his own fortunes. He sailed the seas and penetrated the forest, and built cities and lynched the horse thieves, and fought the Indians and dug the mines, without anybody's help or support. He had even an ill-concealed contempt for regular troops, as men under control and discipline. He scorned government for any other purposes than security and the administration of justice. This was the kind of American that Tocqueville found here in 1833. He says:—

> «The European often sees in the public functionaries simply force; the American sees nothing but law. One may then say that in America a man never obeys a man, or anything but justice and law. Consequently he has formed of himself an opinion which is often exaggerated, but is always salutary. He trusts without fear to his own strength, which appears to him equal to anything. A private individual conceives some sort of enterprise. Even if this enterprise have some sort of connection with the public welfare, it never occurs to him to address himself to the government in order to obtain its aid. He makes his plan known, offers to carry it out, calls other individuals to his aid, and struggles with all his might against any

obstacles there may be in his way. Often, without doubt, he succeeds less well than the State would in his place; but in the long run the general result of individual enterprises far surpasses anything the government could do.»

Now there is no doubt that if this type of character has not passed away, it has been greatly modified; and it has been modified by two agencies — the «labor problem,» as it is called, and legislative protection to native industry. I am not going to make an argument about the value of this protection in promoting native industry, or about its value from the industrial point of view. We may or we may not owe to it the individual progress and prosperity of the United States. About that I do not propose to say anything. What I want to say is that the doctrine that it is a function of government, not simply to foster industry in general, but to consider the case of every particular industry and give it the protection that it needs, could not be preached and practiced for thirty years in a community like this, without modifying the old American conception of the relation of the government to the individual. It makes the government, in a certain sense, a partner in every industrial enterprise, and makes every Presidential election an affair of the pocket to every miner and manufacturer and to his men; for the men have for fully thirty years been told that the amount of their wages would depend, to a certain extent at least, on the way the election went. The notion that the government owes assistance to individuals in carrying on business and making a livelihood has in fact, largely through the tariff discussions, permeated a very large class of the community, and has materially changed what I may call the American outlook. It has greatly reinforced among the foreign-born population the socialistic ideas which many bring here with them, of the powers and duties of the State toward labor; for it is preached vehemently by the employing class.

What makes this look the more serious is, that our political and social manners are not adapted to it. In Europe, the State is possessed of an administrative machine which has a finish, efficacy, and permanence unknown here. Tocqueville comments on its absence among us; and it is, as all the advocates of civil-service reform know, very difficult to supply. All the agencies of the government suffer from the imposition on them of what I may call non-American duties. For instance, a custom-house organized as a political machine was never intended to collect the enormous sum of duties which must pass through its hands under our tariff. A post-office whose master has to be changed every four years to «placate» Tammany, or the anti-Snappers, or any other body of politicians, was never intended to handle the huge mass which American mails have now become. One of the greatest objections to the income tax is the prying into people's affairs which it involves. No man likes to tell what his income is to every stranger, much less to a politician, which our collectors are sure to be. Secrecy on the part of the collector is in fact essential to reconcile people to it in England or Germany, where it is firmly established; but our collectors sell their lists to the newspapers in order to make the contributors pay up.

In all these things, we are trying to meet the burdens and responsibilities of much older societies with the machinery of a much earlier and simpler state of things. It is high time to halt in this progress until our administrative system has been brought up to the level even of our present requirements. It is quite true that, with our system of State and federal constitutions laying prohibitions on the Legislature and Congress, any great extension of the sphere of government in our time seems very unlikely. Yet the assumption by Congress, with the support of the Supreme Court, of the power to issue paper money in time of peace, the power to make prolonged purchases of a commodity like silver, the power to impose an income tax, to execute great public works, and to protect native industry, are powers large enough to effect a great change in the constitution of society and in the distribution of wealth, such as, it is safe to say, in the present state of human culture, no government ought to have and exercise.

One hears every day from educated people some addition to the number of things which «governments» ought to do, but for which any government we have at present is totally unfit. One listens to them with amazement, when looking at the material of which our government is composed,—for the matter of that, of which all governments are composed; for I suppose there is no question that all legislative bodies in the world have in twenty years run down in quality. The parliamentary system is apparently failing to meet the demands of modern democratic society, and is falling into some disrepute; but it would seem as if there was at present just as little chance of a substitute of any kind as of the dethronement of universal suffrage. It will probably last indefinitely, and be as good or as bad as its constituents make it. But this probable extension of the powers and functions of government makes more necessary than ever a free expression of opinion, and especially of educated opinion. We may rail at «mere talk» as much as we please, but the probability is that the affairs of nations and of men will be more and more regulated by talk. The amount of talk which is now expended on all subjects of human interest — and in «talk» I include contributions to periodical literature — is something of which no previous age has had the smallest conception. Of course it varies infinitely in quality. A very large proportion of it does no good beyond relieving the feelings of the talker. Political philosophers maintain, and with good reason, that one of its greatest uses is keeping down discontent under popular government. It is undoubtedly true that it is an immense relief to a man with a grievance to express his feelings about it in words, even if he knows that his words will have no immediate effect. Self-love is apt to prevent most men from thinking that anything they say with passion or earnestness will utterly and finally fail. But still it is safe to suppose that one half of the talk of the world on subjects of general interest is waste. But the other half certainly tells. We know this from the change in ideas from generation to generation. We see that opinions which at one time everybody held became absurd in the course of half a century — opinions about religion and morals and manners and government. Nearly every man of my age can recall old opinions of his own on subjects of general interest, which he once thought highly respectable, and which he is now almost ashamed of having ever held. He does not remember when he changed them, or why, but somehow they have passed away from him.

In communities these changes are often very striking. The transformation, for instance, of the England of Cromwell into the England of Queen Anne, or of the New England of Cotton Mather into the New England of Theodore Parker and Emerson, was very extraordinary, but it would be very difficult to say in detail what brought it about or when it began. Lecky has some curious observations in his «History of Rationalism» on these silent changes in new beliefs, apropos of the disappearance of the belief in witchcraft. Nobody could say what had swept it away; but it appeared that in a certain year people were ready to burn old women as witches, and a few years later were ready to laugh at or pity any one who thought old women could be witches. "At one period," says he, "we find every one disposed to believe in witches; at a later period we find this predisposition has silently passed away." The belief in witchcraft may perhaps be considered a somewhat violent illustration, like the change in public opinion about slavery in this country. But there can be no doubt that it is talk — somebody's, anybody's, everybody's talk — by which these changes are wrought, by which each generation comes to feel and think differently from its predecessor.

No one ever talks freely about anything without contributing something, let it be ever so little, to the unseen forces which carry the race on to its final destiny. Even if he does not make a positive impression, he counteracts or modifies some other impression, or sets in motion some train of ideas in some one else, which helps to change the face of the world. So I shall, in disregard of the great laudation of silence which filled the earth in the days of Carlyle, say that one of the functions of an educated man is to talk; and of course he should try to talk wisely.

GOETHE

(1749–1832)

BY EDWARD DOWDEN

Johann Wolfgang Goethe was born at Frankfort-on-the-Main on August 28th, 1749, and died at Weimar on March 22d, 1832. His great life, extending over upwards of fourscore years, makes him a man of the eighteenth century and also of the nineteenth. He belongs not only to German but to European literature. And in the history of European literature his position is that of successor to Voltaire and Rousseau. Humanity, as Voltaire said, had lost its title-deeds, and the task of the eighteenth century was to recover them. Under all Voltaire's zeal for destruction in matters of religious belief lay a positive faith and a creative sentiment,— a faith in human intellect and the sentiment of social justice. What indefatigable toil! what indefatigable play! Surely it was not all to establish a negation. Voltaire poured a gay yet bitter *élan* into the intellectual movement of his time. Yet amid his various efforts for humanity he wanted love; he wanted reverence. And although a positive tendency underlies his achievements, we are warranted in repeating the common sentence, that upon the whole he destroyed more than he built up.

Voltaire fought to enfranchise the understanding. Rousseau dreamed, brooded, suffered, to emancipate the heart. A wave of passion, or at least of sentiment, swept over Europe with the ‹Nouvelle Héloise,› the ‹Émile,› the ‹Confessions.› It was Rousseau, exclaims Byron, who «threw enchantment over passion,» who «knew how to make madness beautiful.» Such an emancipation of the heart was felt, in the eighteenth century, to be a blessed deliverance from the material interests and the eager yet too arid speculation of the age. But Byron in that same passage of ‹Childe Harold› names Rousseau «the self-torturing sophist.» And a sophist Rousseau was. His intellect fed upon fictions, and dangerous fictions,— fictions respecting nature, respecting the individual man, respecting human society. Therefore his intellect failed to illuminate, clarify, tranquilize his heart. His emotions were turbid, restless, and lacking in sanity.

Here then were Goethe's two great predecessors: one a most vivacious intelligence, the other a brooding sensibility; one aiming at an emancipation of the understanding, but deficient in reverence and in love; the other aiming at an emancipation of the affections, but deficient in sanity of thought. In what relation stood Goethe to these great forces of the eighteenth century?

In his old age Goethe, speaking of Voltaire, uses the words «a universal source of light.» But as a young man he was repelled by «the factious dishonesty of Voltaire, and his perversion of so many worthy subjects.» «He would never have done,» says Goethe, «with degrading religion and the sacred books, for the sake of injuring priestcraft, as they called it.» Goethe, indeed, did not deny a use to the spirit of negation. Mephistopheles lives and works. Yet he lives and works as the unwilling servant of the Lord, and the service he renders is to provoke men from indolence to activity.

Into the influence of Rousseau, on the contrary, and into the general movement of feeling to which Rousseau belonged, Goethe in his youth was caught, almost inevitably; and he abandoned himself to it for a time, it might seem without restraint.

Yet Goethe differed from Rousseau as profoundly as he differed from Voltaire. Rousseau's undisciplined sensibility, morbidly excited by the harshness or imagined harshness of his fellows, by bodily torment, by broodings in solitude, became at last one quivering mass of disease. «No tragedy had ever a fifth act so squalid.» What a contrast to the closing scenes of Goethe's life in that house of his, like a modest temple of the Muses, listening to Plutarch read aloud by his daughter-in-law, or serenely active, «ohne Hast aber ohne Rast» (without haste, but without rest), in widening his sympathies with men or enlarging his knowledge of nature.

How was this? Why did the ways part so widely for Rousseau and for Goethe?

The young creator of 'Werther' may seem to have started on his career as a German Rousseau. In reality, 'Werther' expressed only a fragment of Goethe's total self. A reserve force of will and an intellect growing daily in clearness and in energy would not permit him to end as Rousseau ended. In 'Götz von Berlichingen' there goes up a cry for freedom; it presents the more masculine side of that spirit of revolt from the bonds of the eighteenth century, that «return to nature,» which is presented in its more feminine aspects by 'Werther.' But by degrees it became evident to Goethe that the only true ideal of freedom is a liberation not of the passions, not of the intellect, but of the whole man; that this involves a conciliation of all the powers and faculties within us; and that such a conciliation can be effected only by degrees, and by steadfast toil.

And so we find him willing during ten years at Weimar to undertake work which might appear to be fatal to the development of his genius. To reform army administration, make good roads, work the mines with energetic intelligence, restore the finances to order,—was this fit employment for one born to be a poet? Except a few lyrics and the prose ‹Iphigenie,› these years produced no literary work of importance; yet Goethe himself speaks of them as his «zweite Schriftstellerepoche,»—his second epoch as a writer. They were needful to make him a master in the art of life, needful to put him into possession of all his powers. Men of genius are quick growers; but men of the highest genius, which includes the wisdom of human life, are not speedily ripe. Goethe had entered literature early; he had stormed the avenues. Now at six-and-twenty he was a chief figure in German, even in European, literature; and from twenty-six to thirty-seven he published, we may say nothing. But though he ceased to astonish the world, he was well employed in widening the basis of his existence; in organizing his faculties; in conciliating passions, intellect, and will; in applying his mind to the real world; in endeavoring to comprehend it aright; in testing and training his powers by practical activity.

A time came when he felt that his will and skill were mature; that he was no longer an apprentice in the art of living, but a master craftsman. Tasks that had grown irksome and were felt to be a distraction from higher duties, he now abandoned. Goethe fled for a time to Italy, there to receive his degree in the high school of life, and to start upon a course of more advanced studies. Thenceforward until his closing days the record is one of almost uninterrupted labor in his proper fields of literature, art, and science. «In Rome,» he wrote, «I have for the first time found myself, for the first time come into harmony with myself, and grown happy and rational.» He had found himself, because his passions and his intellect now co-operated; his pursuit of truth had all the ardor of a first love; his pursuit of beauty was not a fantastic chase, but was subject to rational law; and his effort after truth and his effort after beauty were alike supported by an adult will.

His task, regarded as a whole, was to do over again the work of the Renascence. But whereas the Renascence had been a large national or European movement, advancing towards its ends partly through popular passions and a new enthusiasm, the work which Goethe accomplished was more an affair of intelligence, criticism, conscious self-direction. It was less of a flood sweeping away old dikes and dams, and more of a dawn quietly and gradually drawing back the borders of darkness and widening the skirts of light. A completely developed human being, for the uses of the world,—this was the ideal in which Goethe's thoughts centred, and towards which his most important writings constantly tend. A completely developed State or commonwealth should follow, as an ideal arising out of the needs and demands of a complete individual. Goethe knew that growth comes not by self-observation and self-analysis, but by exercise. Therefore he turned himself and would turn his disciples to action, to the objective world; and in order that this action may be profitable, it must be definite and within a limited sphere. He preaches self-renunciation; but the self-renunciation he commends is not self-mortification; it is the active self-abandonment of devotion to our appropriate work. Such is the teaching of 'Wilhelm Meister': it traces the progress of a youth far from extraordinary, yet having within him the capacity for growth, progress through a thousand errors and illusions, from splendid dreams to modest reality. Life is discovered by Wilhelm to be a difficult piece of scholarship. The cry for freedom in 'Götz,' the limitless sigh of passion heard in 'Werther,' are heard no more. If freedom is to be attained, it can only be through obedience; if we are to «return to nature,» it cannot be in Rousseau's way but through a wise art of living, an art not at odds with nature, but its complement:—

> «This is an art which does mend nature — but
> The art itself is nature.»

If we ask,—for this, after all, is the capital question of criticism,—What has Goethe done to make us better? the answer is: He has made each of us aspire and endeavor to be no fragment of manhood, but a man; he has taught us that to squander ourselves in vain desires is the road to spiritual poverty; that to discover our appropriate work, and to embody our passion in such work, is the way to true wealth; that such passion and such toil must be not servile, but glad and free; that the use of our intelligence is not chiefly to destroy, but to guide our activity in construction; and that in doing our best work we incorporate ourselves in the best possible way in the life of our fellows. Such lessons may seem obvious; but they had not been taught by Goethe's great predecessors, Voltaire and Rousseau. Goethe, unlike Voltaire, inculcates reverence and love; unlike Rousseau, he teaches us to see objects clearly as they are, he trains us to sanity. And Europe needed sanity in the days of Revolution and in the days which followed of Reaction.

Sanity for the imagination Goethe found in classical art. The young leader of the Romantic revival in Germany resigned his leadership; he seemed to his contemporaries to have lost the fire and impulse of his youth; his work was found cold and formal. A great change had indeed taken place within him; but his ardor had only grown steadier and stronger, extending now to every part of his complex nature. The change was a transition from what is merely inward and personal to what is outward and general. Goethe cared less than formerly to fling out his private passions, and cared more to comprehend the world and human life and to interpret these through art. He did not go into bondage under the authority of the ancients; but he found their methods right, and he endeavored to work as they had worked. For a time the reaction carried him too far: in seeking for what is general, he sometimes passed on to what is abstract, and so was forced into the error of offering symbols to represent these abstractions, instead of bodying forth his ideas in imaginative creations. But in the noble drama of 'Iphigenie,' in the epic-idyll of 'Hermann und Dorothea,' and in many of the ballads written during his period of close companionship with Schiller, we have examples of art at once modern in sentiment and classical in method.

Goethe's faith in the methods of classical art never passed away, but his narrow exclusiveness yielded. He became, with certain guiding principles which served as a control, a great eclectic, appropriating to his own uses whatever he perceived to be excellent. As in 'Hermann und Dorothea' he unites the influences of Greek art with true German feeling, so in his collection of short lyrics, the 'West-Östlicher Divan' (West-Eastern Divan), he brings together the genius of the Orient and that of the Western world, and sheds over both the spiritual illumination of the wisdom of his elder years. Gradually his creative powers waned, but he was still interested in all — except perhaps politics — that can concern the mind; he was still the greatest of critics, entering with his intelligence into everything and understanding everything, as nearly universal in his sympathies as a human mind can be. The Goethe of these elder years is seen to most advantage in the 'Conversations with Eckermann.'

The most invulnerable of Goethe's writings are his lyrical poems; against the best of these, criticism can allege nothing. They need no interpreter. But the reader who studies them in chronological order will observe that as time went on, the lyric which is a spontaneous jet of feeling is replaced by the lyric in which there is constructive art and considerate evolution. In the poems of the 'West-Östlicher Divan' Goethe returns to the lyric of spontaneity, but their inspiration is rather that of a gracious wisdom, at once serious and playful, than of passion.

His period of romance and sentiment is best represented by 'The Sorrows of Werther.' His adult wisdom of life is found most abundantly in 'Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship.' The world has long since agreed that if Goethe is to be represented by a single work, it shall be by 'Faust.' And even those who perceive that 'Faust' is best understood by being taken along with Goethe's other writings — his early 'Prometheus,' his autobiography, his travels in Italy, his classical dramas, his scientific studies, his work as a critic, his vast correspondence, his conversations in old age — cannot quarrel with the judgment of the world.

‘Faust,’ if we include under that name the First and the Second Parts, is the work of Goethe's whole life. Begun and even far advanced in early manhood, it was taken up again in his midmost years, and was completed with a faltering hand in the closing season of his old age. What it loses in unity, or at least in harmonious development as a piece of art, it gains in autobiographical interest. All his works, Goethe said, constituted a great confession. More than any other of his writings, ‘Faust’ is the confession of his life.

There are two ways in which a reader may deal with ‘Faust.’ He may choose for his own delight a fragment, detach it and disregard the rest; he may view this fragment, if he pleases, as a whole, as a rounded work of art. Such a reader will refuse to pass beyond the First Part of the vast encyclopædic poem. To do this is legitimate. The earliest form in which we possess the drama, that of the transcript made by Fräulein von Göchhausen, is a tragedy which might be named ‘The Tragedy of Margaret.’ Possibilities of further development lay in the subject, were indeed required by the subject, and Goethe had probably already conceived certain of them; yet the stadium in the progress of Faust's history included in ‘The Tragedy of Margaret’ had a unity in itself. But a reader may approach ‘Faust’ otherwise; he may view it as expressing the complete mind of Goethe on some of the deepest problems of human life. Viewing it thus, he must accept the whole work as Goethe has given it; he must hold in abeyance, at least for a time, his own particular likings and dislikes. While keeping his mind open to all the poetry of Faust, he will soon discover that here is something more than a poem. It may be unfortunate for the work of art that it belongs, certainly in its execution, possibly even in the growth of its conception, to far sundered periods of its author's career, when his feelings respecting art were different, when his capacity for rendering his ideas was now more and now less adequate. Such a reader, however, would part with nothing: in what is admirable he finds the master's hand; in what is feeble he discovers the same hand, but faltering, and pathetic in its infirmity. He is interested in ‘Faust’ not solely or chiefly as ‘The Tragedy of Margaret’: he finds in it the intellect, the character, the life of Goethe; it is a repository of the deepest thoughts and feelings concerning human existence of a wise seer, a repository in which he laid by those thoughts and feelings during sixty years of his mortal wayfaring.

From early manhood to extreme old age ‘Faust’ was with Goethe, receiving now and again, in Frankfort, in Weimar, in Rome, some new accession. We can distinguish the strata or formations of youth, of manhood, and of the closing years. We recognize by their diversities of style those parts which were written when creation was swift and almost involuntary, a passion and a joy, and those parts through which Goethe labored at an old man's pace, accomplishing to-day a hand's-breadth, to-morrow perhaps less, and binding blank pages into his manuscript, that the sight of the gaps might irritate him to produce. What unity can such a work possess, except that which comes from the fact that it all proceeded from a single mind, and that some main threads of thought — for it would be rash to speak of a ground idea — run through the several parts and bind them together? ‹Faust› has not the unity of a lake whose circuit the eye can contemplate, a crystal set among the hills. Its unity is that of a river, rising far away in mountain solitudes, winding below many a mirrored cliff, passing the habitations of men, temple and mart, fields of rural toil and fields of war, reaching it may be dull levels, and forgetting the bright speed it had, until at last the dash of waves is heard, and its course is accomplished; but from first to last one stream, proceeding from a single source. Tourists may pick out a picturesque fragment of its wanderings, and this is well; but perhaps it is better to find the poetry of its entire career, from its cloudy cradle to the flats where it loses itself in the ocean.

The first part of ‹Faust› is itself the work of more periods than one. The original conception may belong to Goethe's student days at Strassburg. He had grown weary of the four Faculties,— alas, even of theology; he had known a maiden as fair and sweet and simple as Gretchen, and he had left her widowed of her first love; and there in Strassburg was the presence of that old Cathedral, which inspired so terrible a scene in the ‹Faust.› From Strassburg he returned to Frankfort, and no moments of his career of authorship were more fruitful than these which preceded the first Weimar years. It was in the heart of the Storm and Stress; it was the time of ‹Götz› and ‹Mahomet› and the ‹Wandering Jew› and ‹Werther› and ‹Prometheus.› Here in Faust was another and a nobler Werther seeking the infinite; here was another Prometheus, a Titan shackled yet unsubduable. By Goethe's twenty-sixth year the chief portions of the ‹Faust, a Fragment,› published when he was forty-one, had been written. But two scenes were added in Rome,— one of these strange in its fantasy, the Witches' Kitchen,— as if to show that the poet of the North was not quite enslaved by the beauty of classic art. It was in the last decade of the eighteenth century that Schiller succeeded in persuading Goethe to open his Faust papers, and try to recover the threads of his design. Not until 1808, Goethe's fifty-ninth year, was the First Part published as we now possess it.

It is therefore incorrect to speak of this Part as the work of the author's youth; even here a series of strata belonging to different periods can be distinguished, and critics have contended that even in this Part may be discovered two schemes or plans not wholly in harmony each with the other.

The first Fragment was written, as has been said, in the spirit of the Storm and Stress. Goethe was weary of the four Faculties. The magic work of the time which was to restore vigor and joy to men was *Nature.* This is the theme of the opening scene of 'Faust.' Among old instruments and dusty folios and ancestral lumber and brute skeletons, away from Nature and her living founts of inspiration, the old scholar has found neither joy nor true knowledge. He opens the book of Nostradamus and gazes upon the sign of the Macrocosm; here in a symbol he beholds the life and energy of nature:—

> «Where shall I grasp thee, infinite Nature, where?
> Ye breasts, ye fountains of all life whereon
> Hang heaven and earth.»

He cannot grasp them; and then turning from the great Cosmos, he thinks he may at least dare to invoke the spirit of our own mother planet Earth. But to Faust, with eyes bleared with the dust of the study, to Faust, living in his own speculations or in dogmatic systems, the aspect of the Earth Spirit — a living fire — is terrible. He falls back upon himself almost despairing, when the famulus Wagner enters. What Werner was to the idealist Wilhelm Meister, Wagner is to the idealist Faust: the mere scraping together of a little hoard of barren facts contents Wagner; such grief, such despair as Faust's, are for this Philistine of learning impossible. And then the fragment of 1790 passes on to Mephistopheles. Whether or not Goethe found the features of his critical demon in Herder (as Grimm supposes), and afterwards united these to the more pronounced likeness in his friend Mephistopheles Merck, matters little. Whether Herder and Merck had been present or not, Goethe would have found Mephistopheles in his own heart. For the contrast between the idealist Faust and the realist Mephistopheles exists in some form or other in almost every great creation of Goethe. It is the contrast between Werther and Albert, between Tasso and Antonio, between Edward and the Captain. Sometimes the nobler spirit of worldliness is dwelt on, as in the case of Antonio; sometimes the cold, hard, cynical side, as in the case of Mephistopheles. The theme of Faust as originally conceived was the turning of an idealist from his own private thoughts and dreams to the real world; from all that is unnatural,— systems, speculations, barren knowledge,— to nature and the founts of life; from the solitary cell to the company of men; to action, beauty, life, and love. If he can really succeed in achieving this wisely and well, Faust is saved. He is delivered from solitude, the inane of speculation, the vagueness of idealism, and made one with the band of his toiling fellows. But to accompany him there is the spirit of base worldliness, the realist, the cynic, who sees the meaner side of all that is actual, who if possible will seduce Faust into accepting the world apart from that elevating spirit which ennobles actual life, who will try to baffle and degrade Faust by degrading all that he now seeks,—action and beauty and life and love.

It is Goethe himself who is at odds with himself,—the realist Goethe set over against the idealist Goethe; and Mephistopheles is the base realist, the cynic whose endeavor is to mar the union of high poetry and high prose in human life, which union of high poetry with high prose Goethe always looked upon as the true condition of man's activity. In the Prologue in Heaven, written when Schiller had persuaded Goethe to take up the threads of his play, the Lord speaks of Faust as his servant. Mephistopheles wagers that he will seduce Faust from his allegiance to the Highest. The Lord does not wager; he *knows*:—

«Though now he serve me in a maze of doubt,
Yet I will lead him soon where all is clear;
The gardener knows, when first the bushes sprout,
That bloom and fruit will deck the riper year.»

These vague passionate longings of Faust after truth and reality and life and love are not evil; they are good: they are as yet indeed but the sprouting of the immature leaf and bud, but the Lord sees in these the fruit that is to be. Therefore let Mephistopheles, the spirit of negation, try his worst, and at the last discover how an earnest striver's ways are justified by God. Faust may wander, err, fall, grievously offend,—«as long as man lives, man errs;» but for him who ever strives upward, through all his errors, there is redemption in the end.

The poem belongs to its epoch. Faust is the idealist, Mephistopheles is the realist, of the eighteenth century. Faust aspires to nature and freedom like one who had drunk deeply of Rousseau. Mephistopheles speaks like a degraded disciple of Voltaire, who has lost his master's positive faith in the human reason. Goethe can accept as his own neither the position of Voltaire nor that of Rousseau; but actually he started in life as an antagonist of Voltaire and a disciple of Rousseau, and in like manner his Faust starts on his career as one who longs for a «return to nature.» While from merely negative criticism nothing virtuous can be born, the vague longings of one who loves and hopes promise measureless good.

Faust's vast aspirations, then, are not sinful; they only need to be limited and directed to suitable ends. It is as God's servant that he goes forth with the Demon from his study to the world. And Mephistopheles's first attempt to degrade Faust is a failure. In the orgy of Auerbach's cellar, while the boisterous young bloods clash their glasses, the old scholar sits silent, isolated, ashamed. It is only by infecting his blood with the witch's poison that Mephistopheles can lay hold of the spirit of Faust even for a time; and had he not seen in the mirror that vision of Helena, whom he rightly loves, and whom indeed he needs, he could not have put to his lips the filthy brewage of the witch. But now indeed he is snared; the poison rages in his veins; for one hour he is transformed into what the world basely calls a man of pleasure. Yet Faust is not wholly lost: his better self, the untrained, untamed idealist, begins to reassert its power; the fumes of the poison dissipate themselves. Guilty though he be, his love of Margaret is not what Mephistopheles requires that it should be: it is not calculating, egoistic, cynical, nor dull, easeful, and lethargic. It is not the crime of an experienced worldling nor of a dull, low liver: it is the crime of one whose unwise heart and untaught imagination delude him; and therefore though his fall be deep, it is not fatal. The wrong he has wrought may be blind and terrible as that of Othello to Desdemona; but it is not the serpentine stinging of an Iago or a Mephistopheles.

So through anguish and remorse Faust is doing off the swathebands of delusion, learning to master his will, learning his own heart, learning the meaning of existence: he does not part from his ideal self, his high aspirations, his ardent hopes; he is rather transforming these into realities; he is advancing from dreams to facts, so that in the end, when his life becomes a lofty prose, it may be interpenetrated by a noble poetry.

It were long to trace the history of Faust through the ever purifying and ascending scale of energies exhibited in the Second Part of the drama. Affairs of State, science, art, war—all that Goethe had known by experience—appear in this encyclopædic poem. One word, however, must be said respecting the 'Helena.' It is a mistake to view this central portion of the Second Part as solely or chiefly an allegory of the wedlock of classic and romantic art. As science is shown to form a needful part of Faust's turning from the inane of metaphysics to the positive world, so from the Greek spirit he learns sanity and strength; the deliverance of the ideal man in Faust is aided by the beauty and the healthfulness of classic art. Through beauty, as Schiller tried to show in his letters on 'Æsthetic Culture,' we attain to freedom. Faust is not an artist, but a *man;* Helena is but one of the spirits whose influence is needed to make him real and elevated. It is she who qualifies him for achieving practical work in a high, ideal spirit.

The Fourth Act of the Second Part is wholly concerned with practical work. What is this which engages the student of the metaphysic cell, who had gone through the four Faculties, and is now once again grown old? What is this? Only well-defined and useful activity. He has rescued some acres of arable land from the rage of the barren sea.

But Faust is not yet wholly delivered from evil; his activity is useful, indeed, but it lacks the finer grace of charity. He commissions Mephistopheles to destroy the cottage of old Philemon and Baucis, which stands in the way of his territorial improvements. It is the last crime of the unregenerate will. The four gray women — Care and Blame and Want and Crime — now assail him; but there is virtue in him to the last. However it may be with himself, grant only that ages hence the children of men, free and happy, may dwell upon the soil which he has saved for their place of labor and of love,— grant but this, and even in the anticipation of it he is made possessor of the highest bliss. Nor indeed is higher permitted to man on earth. And now that Faust has at last found satisfaction, and said to the passing moment, «Stay, thou art so fair,» the time has come for Mephistopheles to claim his soul. But in this very aspiration after the perfect joy of others — not his own — Faust is forever delivered from the Evil One. The gray old man lies stretched upon the sand. Higher powers than those of his own will take him, guard him, lead him forward. The messengers of God bear away his immortal part. All Holy Hermits, all Holy Innocents, all Holy Virgins, the less and the greater Angels, and redeemed women who have sinned and sorrowed and have been purified, aid in his ultimate purification. It is the same thought which was interpreted in a lower key when Wilhelm Meister's fate was intrusted to Natalia. Usefulness is good; activity is good: but over all these should soar and brood the Divine graces of life, and love the chief of these. That which leads us farther than all the rest is what Goethe names «the imperishable womanly grace,» that of love. And so the great mystery-play reaches its close.

Edward Dowden.

Biographical Note.—Johann Wolfgang von Goethe was born at Frankfort-on-the-Main, August 28th, 1749; he attended the University of Leipzig 1765–1768, and went to Strassburg in 1770, where he met Herder, made the acquaintance of Shakespeare, and in 1771 took his degree. ‹Götz von Berlichingen› in 1773 announced the dawn of a new era in German letters, and in 1774 ‹The Sorrows of Werther› made the poet world-famous. In 1775 Goethe accepted the invitation of Duke Carl August and went to Weimar, which remained thenceforth his home. The Italian journey, marking an epoch in the poet's life, took place in 1786–1787. The ‹Faust Fragment› appeared in 1790. The friendship with Schiller, also of far-reaching importance in Goethe's life, began in 1794 and was terminated only by Schiller's death in 1805. ‹Hermann and Dorothea› was published in 1797. In 1806 Goethe married Christiane Vulpius. The First Part of ‹Faust› appeared in 1808;—in 1816 the poet is at work upon his ‹Autobiography› and the ‹Italian Journey›; the first part of ‹Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship› appeared in 1821, and was completed in 1829. ‹Faust› was finished on July 20th, 1831. Goethe died at Weimar on March 22d, 1832.

FROM ‹FAUST›

Chorus of the Archangels; from the Prologue in Heaven

Shelley's Translation

Raphael—The sun makes music as of old
Amid the rival spheres of heaven,
On its predestined circle rolled
With thunder speed; the angels even
Draw strength from gazing on its glance,
Though none its meaning fathom may·
The world's unwithered countenance
Is bright as at creation's day.
Gabriel—And swift and swift with rapid lightness
The adorned earth spins silently,
Alternating Elysian brightness
With deep and dreadful night; the sea
Foams in broad billows from the deep
Up to the rocks, and rocks and ocean,
Onward, with spheres which never sleep,
Are hurried in eternal motion.
Michael—And tempests in contention roar
From land to sea, from sea to land;
And raging, weave a chain of power,
Which girds the earth as with a band.

A flashing desolation there
Flames before the thunder's way;
But thy servants, Lord, revere
The gentle changes of thy day.

CHORUS OF THE THREE

The angels draw strength from thy glance,
Though no one comprehend thee may;
Thy world's unwithered countenance
Is bright as on creation's day.

SCENES FROM ‹FAUST›

Translated by Bayard Taylor

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Faust and Wagner

FAUST

Oh, happy he, who still renews
The hope from Error's deeps to rise forever!
That which one does not know, one needs to use,
And what one knows, one uses never.
But let us not, by such despondence, so
The fortune of this hour embitter!
Mark how, beneath the evening sunlight's glow,
The green-embosomed houses glitter!
The glow retreats; done is the day of toil;
It yonder hastes, new fields of life exploring;
Ah, that no wing can lift me from the soil,
Upon its track to follow, follow soaring!
Then would I see eternal Evening gild
The silent world beneath me glowing,
On fire each mountain-peak, with peace each valley filled,
The silver brook to golden rivers flowing.
The mountain chain, with all its gorges deep,
Would then no more impede my godlike motion;
And now before mine eyes expands the ocean
With all its bays, in shining sleep!
Yet finally the weary god is sinking;
The new-born impulse fires my mind,—

I hasten on, his beams eternal drinking,
The Day before me and the Night behind,
Above me heaven unfurled, the floor of waves beneath me,—
A glorious dream! though now the glories fade.
Alas! the wings that lift the mind no aid
Of wings to lift the body can bequeath me.
Yet in each soul is born the pleasure
Of yearning onward, upward and away,
When o'er our heads, lost in the vaulted azure,
The lark sends down his flickering lay,
When over crags and piny highlands
The poising eagle slowly soars,
And over plains and lakes and islands
The crane sails by to other shores.

WAGNER

I've had, myself, at times, some odd caprices,
But never yet such impulse felt, as this is.
One soon fatigues on woods and fields to look,
Nor would I beg the bird his wing to spare us:
How otherwise the mental raptures bear us
From page to page, from book to book!
Then winter nights take loveliness untold,
As warmer life in every limb had crowned you;
And when your hands unroll some parchment rare and old,
All heaven descends, and opens bright around you!

FAUST

One impulse art thou conscious of, at best;
Oh, never seek to know the other!
Two souls, alas! reside within my breast,
And each withdraws from, and repels, its brother.
One with tenacious organs holds in love
And clinging lust the world in its embraces;
The other strongly sweeps, this dust above,
Into the high ancestral spaces.
If there be airy spirits near,
'Twixt heaven and earth on potent errands fleeing,
Let them drop down the golden atmosphere,
And bear me forth to new and varied being!
Yea, if a magic mantle once were mine,
To waft me o'er the world at pleasure,
I would not for the costliest stores of treasure—
Not for a monarch's robe—the gift resign.

Faust and Mephistopheles

FAUST

Canst thou, poor Devil, give me whatsoever?
When was a human soul, in its supreme endeavor,
E'er understood by such as thou?
Yet hast thou food which never satiates now:
The restless, ruddy gold hast thou,
That runs quicksilver-like one's fingers through;
A game whose winnings no man ever knew;
A maid that even from my breast
Beckons my neighbor with her wanton glances,
And Honor's godlike zest,
The meteor that a moment dances,—
Show me the fruits that, ere they're gathered, rot,
And trees that daily with new leafage clothe them!

MEPHISTOPHELES

Such a demand alarms me not:
Such treasures have I, and can show them.
But still the time may reach us, good my friend,
When peace we crave, and more luxurious diet.

FAUST

When on an idler's bed I stretch myself in quiet,
There let at once my record end!
Canst thou with lying flattery rule me,
Until self-pleased myself I see,—
Canst thou with rich enjoyment fool me,
Let that day be the last for me!
The bet I offer.

MEPHISTOPHELES

Done!

FAUST

And heartily!
When thus I hail the Moment flying:
"Ah, still delay—thou art so fair!"—
Then bind me in thy bonds undying,
My final ruin then declare!
Then let the death-bell chime the token,
Then art thou from thy service free!
The clock may stop, the hand be broken,
Then Time be finished unto me!

Forest and Cavern

FAUST [*alone*]

SPIRIT sublime, thou gav'st me, gav'st me all
For which I prayed. Not unto me in vain
Hast thou thy countenance revealed in fire.
Thou gav'st me nature as a kingdom grand,
With power to feel and to enjoy it. Thou
Not only cold, amazed acquaintance yield'st,
But grantest that in her profoundest breast
I gaze, as in the bosom of a friend.
The ranks of living creatures thou dost lead
Before me, teaching me to know my brothers
In air and water and the silent wood.
And when the storm in forests roars and grinds,
The giant firs, in falling, neighbor boughs
And neighbor trunks with crushing weight bear down,
And falling, fill the hills with hollow thunders,—
Then to the cave secure thou leadest me,
Then show'st me mine own self, and in my breast
The deep mysterious miracles unfold.
And when the perfect moon before my gaze
Comes up with soothing light, around me float
From every precipice and thicket damp
The silvery phantoms of the ages past,
And temper the austere delight of thought.

That nothing can be perfect unto Man
I now am conscious. With this ecstasy,
Which brings me near and nearer to the gods,
Thou gav'st the comrade, whom I now no more
Can do without, though, cold and scornful, he
Demeans me to myself, and with a breath,
A word, transforms thy gifts to nothingness.
Within my breast he fans a lawless fire,
Unwearied, for that fair and lovely form:
Thus in desire I hasten to enjoyment,
And in enjoyment pine to feel desire.

MARGARET

[At the spinning-wheel, alone]

MY PEACE is gone,
My heart is sore:
I never shall find it,
Ah, nevermore!

Save I have him near,
The grave is here;
The world is gall
And bitterness all.

My poor weak head
Is racked and crazed;
My thought is lost,
My senses mazed.

My peace is gone,
My heart is sore:
I never shall find it,
Ah, nevermore!

To see him, him only,
At the pane I sit;
To meet him, him only,
The house I quit.

His lofty gait,
His noble size,
The smile of his mouth,
The power of his eyes,

And the magic flow
Of his talk, the bliss
In the clasp of his hand,
And ah! his kiss!

My peace is gone,
My heart is sore:
I never shall find it,
Ah, nevermore!

My bosom yearns
For him alone;
Ah, dared I clasp him,
And hold, and own!

And kiss his mouth
   To heart's desire,
And on his kisses
   At last expire!

MARTHA'S GARDEN

MARGARET

PROMISE me, Henry!—

FAUST

What I can!

MARGARET

How is 't with thy religion, pray?
Thou art a dear, good-hearted man,
And yet, I think, dost not incline that way.

FAUST

Leave that, my child! Thou know'st my love is tender;
For love, my blood and life would I surrender,
And as for faith and church, I grant to each his own.

MARGARET

That's not enough: we must believe thereon.

FAUST

Must we?

MARGARET

Would that I had some influence!
Then, too, thou honorest not the Holy Sacraments.

FAUST

I honor them.

MARGARET

Desiring no possession.
'Tis long since thou hast been to mass or to confession.
Believest thou in God?

FAUST

My darling, who shall dare
«I believe in God!» to say?

Ask priest or sage the answer to declare,
And it will seem a mocking play,
A sarcasm on the asker.

MARGARET

Then thou believest not!

FAUST

Hear me not falsely, sweetest countenance!
Who dare express Him?
And who profess Him,
Saying: I believe in Him!
Who, feeling, seeing,
Deny His being,
Saying: I believe Him not!
The All-enfolding,
The All-upholding,
Folds and upholds he not
Thee, me, Himself?
Arches not there the sky above us?
Lies not beneath us, firm, the earth?
And rise not, on us shining
Friendly, the everlasting stars?
Look I not, eye to eye, on thee,
And feel'st not, thronging
To head and heart, the force,
Still weaving its eternal secret,
Invisible, visible, round thy life?
Vast as it is, fill with that force thy heart,
And when thou in the feeling wholly blessed art,
Call it, then, what thou wilt,—
Call it Bliss! Heart! Love! God!—
I have no name to give it!
Feeling is all in all:
The Name is sound and smoke,
Obscuring Heaven's clear glow.

MARGARET

All that is fine and good, to hear it so:
Much the same way the preacher spoke,
Only with slightly different phrases.

FAUST

The same thing, in all places,
All hearts that beat beneath the heavenly day—

Each in its language — say;
Then why not I in mine as well?

MARGARET

To hear it thus, it may seem passable;
And yet some hitch in't there must be,
For thou hast no Christianity.

FAUST

Dear love!

MARGARET

I've long been grieved to see
That thou art in such company.

FAUST

How so?

MARGARET

The man who with thee goes, thy mate,
Within my deepest, inmost soul I hate.
In all my life there's nothing
Has given my heart so keen a pang of loathing
As his repulsive face has done.

FAUST

Nay, fear him not, my sweetest one!

MARGARET

I feel his presence like something ill.
I've else, for all, a kindly will,
But, much as my heart to see thee yearneth,
The secret horror of him returneth;
And I think the man a knave, as I live!
If I do him wrong, may God forgive!

FAUST

There must be such queer birds, however.

MARGARET

Live with the like of him may I never!
When once inside the door comes he,
He looks around so sneeringly,
And half in wrath:
One sees that in nothing no interest he hath:

'Tis written on his very forehead
That love, to him, is a thing abhorrèd.
I am so happy on thine arm,
So free, so yielding, and so warm,
And in his presence stifled seems my heart.

FAUST

Foreboding angel that thou art!

In the Dungeon

In a niche of the wall a shrine, with an image of the Mater Dolorosa. Pots of flowers before it

MARGARET

[*Putting fresh flowers in the pots*]

INCLINE, O Maiden,
Thou sorrow-laden,
Thy gracious countenance upon my pain!

The sword thy heart in,
With anguish smarting,
Thou lookest up to where thy Son is slain!

Thou seest the Father;
The sad sighs gather,
And bear aloft thy sorrow and his pain!

Ah, past guessing,
Beyond expressing,
The pangs that wring my flesh and bone!
Why this anxious heart so burneth,
Why it trembleth, why it yearneth,
Knowest thou, and thou alone!

Where'er I go, what sorrow,
What woe, what woe and sorrow
Within my bosom aches!
Alone, and ah! unsleeping,
I'm weeping, weeping, weeping,—
The heart within me breaks.

The pots before my window,
Alas! my tears did wet,
As in the early morning
For thee these flowers I set.

Within my lonely chamber
The morning sun shone red:
I sat in utter sorrow,
Already on my bed.

Help! rescue me from death and stain!
O Maiden!
Thou sorrow-laden,
Incline thy countenance upon my pain!

IN THE DUNGEON

FAUST

With a bunch of keys and a lamp, before an iron door

A SHUDDER, long unfelt, comes o'er me;
Mankind's collected woe o'erwhelms me here.
She dwells within the dark, damp walls before me,
And all her crime was a delusion dear!
What! I delay to free her?
I dread, once again to see her?
On! my shrinking but lingers Death more near.

[*He grasps the lock: the sound of singing is heard inside.*]

My mother the harlot,
Who put me to death;
My father the varlet,
Who eaten me hath!
Little sister, so good,
Laid my bones in the wood,
In the damp moss and clay:
Then was I a beautiful bird o' the wood:
Fly away! Fly away!

FAUST [*unlocking*]

She does not dream her lover listens near;
That he the rattling chain, the rustling straw, can hear.

MARGARET [*hiding herself on the pallet*]

Woe! woe! They come. O death of bitterness!

FAUST [*whispering*]

Hush! hush! The hour is come that frees thee.

MARGARET [*throwing herself before him*]

Art thou a man? then pity my distress!

FAUST

Thy cries will wake the guards, and they will seize thee!

[*He takes hold of the fetters to unlock them.*

MARGARET [*on her knees*]

Who, headsman! unto thee such power
Over me could give?
Thou'rt come for me at midnight hour:
Have mercy on me; let me live!
Is't not soon enough when morning chime has rung?

[*She rises.*

And I am yet so young, so young!
And now death comes, and ruin!
I, too, was fair, and that was my undoing.
My love was near, but now he's far;
Torn lies the wreath, scattered the blossoms are.
Seize me not thus so violently!
Spare me! What have I done to thee?
Let me not vainly entreat thee!
I never chanced, in all my days, to meet thee!

FAUST

Shall I outlive this misery?

MARGARET

Now am I wholly in thy might.
But let me suckle, first, my baby!
I blissed it all this livelong night;
They took 't away, to vex me, maybe,
And now they say I killed the child outright.
And never shall I be glad again.
They sing songs about me! 'tis bad of the folk to do it!
There's an old story has the same refrain;
Who bade them so construe it?

FAUST [*falling upon his knees*]

Here lieth one who loves thee ever,
The thraldom of thy woe to sever.

MARGARET [*flinging herself beside him*]

Oh let us kneel, and call the saints to hide us!
Under the steps beside us,
The threshold under,
Hell heaves in thunder!
The Evil One
With terrible wrath
Seeketh a path
His prey to discover!

FAUST [*aloud*]

Margaret! Margaret!

MARGARET [*attentively listening*]

That was the voice of my lover!

[*She springs to her feet: the fetters fall off.*

Where is he? I heard him call me.
I am free! No one shall enthrall me.
To his neck will I fly,
On his bosom lie!
On the threshold he stood, and *Margaret!* calling,
'Midst of hell's howling and noises appalling,
'Midst of the wrathful, infernal derision,
I knew the sweet sound of the voice of the vision!

FAUST

'Tis I!

MARGARET

'Tis thou! O, say it once again!

[*Clasping him.*

'Tis he! 'tis he! Where now is all my pain?
The anguish of the dungeon, and the chain?
'Tis thou! Thou comest to save me,
And I am saved!
Again the street I see
Where first I looked on thee;
And the garden, brightly blooming,
Where I and Martha wait thy coming.

FAUST [*struggling to leave*]

Come! Come with me!

MARGARET

Delay, now!
So fain I stay, when thou delayest!

[*Caressing him.*

FAUST

Away, now!
If longer here thou stayest,
We shall be made to dearly rue it.

MARGARET

Kiss me!—canst no longer do it?
My friend, so short a time thou 'rt missing,
And hast unlearned thy kissing?
Why is my heart so anxious, on thy breast?
Where once a heaven thy glances did create me,
A heaven thy loving words expressed,
And thou didst kiss as thou wouldst suffocate me—
Kiss me!
Or I'll kiss thee!

[*She embraces him.*

Ah, woe! thy lips are chill,
And still.
How changed in fashion
Thy passion!
Who has done me this ill?

[*She turns away from him.*

FAUST

Come, follow me! My darling, be more bold:
I'll clasp thee, soon, with warmth a thousandfold;
But follow now! 'Tis all I beg of thee.

MARGARET [*turning to him*]

And is it thou? Thou, surely, certainly?

FAUST

'Tis I! Come on!

MARGARET

Thou wilt unloose my chain,
And in thy lap wilt take me once again.
How comes it that thou dost not shrink from me?—
Say, dost thou know, my friend, whom thou mak'st free?

FAUST

Come! come! The night already vanisheth.

MARGARET

My mother have I put to death;
I've drowned the baby born to thee.
Was it not given to thee and me?
Thee, too!—'Tis thou! It scarcely true doth seem—
Give me thy hand! 'Tis not a dream!
Thy dear, dear hand!—But, ah, 'tis wet!
Why, wipe it off! Methinks that yet
There's blood thereon.
Ah, God! what hast thou done?
Nay, sheathe thy sword at last!
Do not affray me!

FAUST

Oh, let the past be past!
Thy words will slay me!

MARGARET

No, no! Thou must outlive us.
Now I'll tell thee the graves to give us:
Thou must begin to-morrow
The work of sorrow!
The best place give to my mother,
Then close at her side my brother,
And me a little away,
But not too very far, I pray!
And here, on my right breast, my baby lay!
Nobody else will lie beside me!—
Ah, within thine arms to hide me,
That was a sweet and a gracious bliss,
But no more, no more can I attain it!
I would force myself on thee and constrain it,
And it seems thou repellest my kiss:
And yet 'tis thou, so good, so kind to see!

FAUST

If thou feelest it is I, then come with me!

MARGARET

Out yonder?

FAUST

To freedom.

MARGARET

If the grave is there,
Death lying in wait, then come!
From here to eternal rest:
No further step — no, no!
Thou goest away! O Henry, if I could go!

FAUST

Thou canst! Just will it! Open stands the door.

MARGARET

I dare not go: there's no hope any more.
Why should I fly? They'll still my steps waylay!
It is so wretched, forced to beg my living,
And a bad conscience sharper misery giving!
It is so wretched, to be strange, forsaken,
And I'd still be followed and taken!

FAUST

I'll stay with thee.

MARGARET

Be quick! Be quick!
Save thy perishing child!
Away! Follow the ridge
Up by the brook,
Over the bridge,
Into the wood,
To the left, where the plank is placed
In the pool!
Seize it in haste!
'Tis trying to rise,
'Tis struggling still!
Save it! Save it!

FAUST

Recall thy wandering will!
One step, and thou art free at last!

MARGARET

If the mountain we had only passed!
There sits my mother upon a stone,—

I feel an icy shiver!
There sits my mother upon a stone,
And her head is wagging ever.
She beckons, she nods not, her heavy head falls o'er;
She slept so long that she wakes no more.
She slept, while we were caressing:
Ah, those were the days of blessing!

FAUST

Here words and prayers are nothing worth;
I'll venture, then, to bear thee forth.

MARGARET

No—let me go! I'll suffer no force!
Grasp me not so murderously!
I've done, else, all things for the love of thee.

FAUST

The day dawns: Dearest! Dearest!

MARGARET

Day? Yes, the day comes,—the last day breaks for me!
My wedding day it was to be!
Tell no one thou hast been with Margaret!
Woe for my garland! The chances
Are over—'tis all in vain!
We shall meet once again,
But not at the dances!
The crowd is thronging, no word is spoken:
The square below
And the streets overflow:
The death-bell tolls, the wand is broken.
I am seized, and bound, and delivered—
Shoved to the block—they give the sign!
Now over each neck has quivered
The blade that is quivering over mine.
Dumb lies the world like the grave!

FAUST

Oh, had I ne'er been born!

MEPHISTOPHELES [*appears outside*]

Off! or you're lost ere morn.
Useless talking, delaying, and praying!

My horses are neighing:
The morning twilight is near.

MARGARET

What rises up from the threshold here?
He! he! suffer him not!
What does he want in this holy spot?
He seeks me!

FAUST

Thou shalt live.

MARGARET

Judgment of God! myself to thee I give.

MEPHISTOPHELES [*to Faust*]

Come! or I'll leave her in the lurch, and thee!

MARGARET

Thine am I, Father! rescue me!
Ye angels, holy cohorts, guard me,
Camp around, and from evil ward me!
Henry! I shudder to think of thee.

MEPHISTOPHELES

She is judged!

VOICE [*from above*]

She is saved!

MEPHISTOPHELES [*to Faust*]

Hither to me!

[*He disappears with Faust.*

VOICE [*from within, dying away*]

Henry! Henry!

THE DEATH OF FAUST

LEMURES

[*Digging with mocking gestures*]

IN YOUTH when I did love, did love,
Methought it was very sweet;
When 'twas jolly and merry every way,
And I blithely moved my feet.

But now old Age, with his stealing steps,
Hath clawed me with his crutch:
I stumbled over the door of a grave;
Why leave they open such?

FAUST

[*Comes forth from the palace, groping his way along the door-posts*]

How I rejoice to hear the clattering spade!
It is the crowd, for me in service moiling,
Till Earth be reconciled to toiling,
Till the proud waves be stayed,
And the sea girded with a rigid zone.

MEPHISTOPHELES [*aside*]

And yet thou'rt laboring for us alone,
With all thy dikes and bulwarks daring;
Since thou for Neptune art preparing —
The Ocean Devil — carousal great.
In every way shall ye be stranded;
The elements with us are banded,
And ruin is the certain fate.

FAUST

Overseer!

MEPHISTOPHELES

Here!

FAUST

However possible,
Collect a crowd of men with vigor,
Spur by indulgence, praise, or rigor,—
Reward, allure, conscript, compel!
Each day report me, and correctly note
How grows in length the undertaken moat.

MEPHISTOPHELES [*half aloud*]

When they to me the information gave,
They spake not of a moat, but of—*a grave.*

FAUST

Below the hills a marshy plain
Infects what I so long have been retrieving;
This stagnant pool likewise to drain
Were now my latest and my best achieving.
To many millions let me furnish soil,
Though not secure, yet free to active toil;
Green, fertile fields, where men and herds go forth
At once, with comfort, on the newest earth,
And swiftly settled on the hill's firm base,
Created by the bold, industrious race.
A land like Paradise here, round about;
Up to the brink the tide may roar without,
And though it gnaw, to burst with force the limit,
By common impulse all unite to hem it.
Yes! to this thought I hold with firm persistence;
The last result of wisdom stamps it true:
He only earns his freedom and existence
Who daily conquers them anew.
Thus here, by dangers girt, shall glide away
Of childhood, manhood, age, the vigorous day:
And such a throng I fain would see,—
Stand on free soil among a people free!
Then dared I hail the Moment fleeing:
«*Ah, still delay—thou art so fair!*»
The traces cannot, of mine earthly being,
In æons perish,—they are there!
In proud fore-feeling of such lofty bliss,
I now enjoy the highest Moment,—this!

[*Faust sinks back: the Lemures take him and lay him upon the ground.*]

MEPHISTOPHELES

No joy could sate him, and suffice no bliss!
To catch but shifting shapes was his endeavor:
The latest, poorest, emptiest Moment—this,—
He wished to hold it fast forever.
Me he resisted in such vigorous wise,
But Time is lord, on earth the old man lies.
The clock stands still—

CHORUS

Stands still! silent as midnight, now!
The index falls.

MEPHISTOPHELES

It falls; and it is finished, here!

CHORUS

'Tis past!

MEPHISTOPHELES

Past! a stupid word.
If past, then why?
Past and pure Naught, complete monotony!
What good for us, this endlessly creating?—
What is created then annihilating?
«And now it's past!» Why read a page so twisted?
'Tis just the same as if it ne'er existed,
Yet goes in circles round as if it had, however:
I'd rather choose, instead, the Void forever.

THE SALVATION OF FAUST

ANGELS

[*Soaring in the higher atmosphere, bearing the immortal part of Faust*]

The noble spirit now is free,
And saved from evil scheming:
Whoe'er aspires unweariedly
Is not beyond redeeming.
And if he feels the grace of love
That from on high is given,
The blessed hosts, that wait above,
Shall welcome him to heaven!

THE YOUNGER ANGELS

They, the roses, freely spended
By the penitent, the glorious,
Helped to make the fight victorious,
And the lofty work is ended.
We this precious soul have won us;
Evil ones we forced to shun us;

Devils fled us when we hit them:
'Stead of pangs of hell, that bit them,
Love pangs felt they, sharper, vaster:
Even he, old Satan Master,
Pierced with keenest pain retreated.
Now rejoice! The work's completed!

THE MORE PERFECT ANGELS

Earth's residue to bear
Hath sorely pressed us;
It were not pure and fair,
Though 'twere asbestus.
When every element
The mind's high forces
Have seized, subdued, and blent,
No angel divorces
Twin natures single grown,
That inly mate them:
Eternal love alone
Can separate them.

THE YOUNGER ANGELS

Mist-like on heights above,
We now are seeing
Nearer and nearer move
Spiritual Being.
The clouds are growing clear;
And moving throngs appear
Of blessed boys,
Free from the earthly gloom,
In circling poise,
Who taste the cheer
Of the new springtime bloom
Of the upper sphere.
Let them inaugurate
Him to the perfect state,
Now, as their peer!

THE BLESSED BOYS

Gladly receive we now
Him, as a chrysalis:
Therefore achieve we now
Pledge of our bliss.

The earth-flakes dissipate
   That cling around him!
See, he is fair and great!
   Divine Life hath crowned him.

DOCTOR MARIANUS

[*In the highest, purest cell*]

Free is the view at last,
   The spirit lifted:
There women, floating past,
   Are upward drifted:
The Glorious One therein,
   With star-crown tender,—
The pure, the Heavenly Queen,
   I know her splendor.

[*Enraptured*]

Highest Mistress of the World!
   Let me in the azure
Tent of Heaven, in light unfurled,
   Here thy Mystery measure!
Justify sweet thoughts that move
   Breast of man to meet thee,
And with holy bliss of love
   Bear him up to greet thee!
With unconquered courage we
   Do thy bidding highest;
But at once shall gentle be,
   When thou pacifiest.
Virgin, pure in brightest sheen,
   Mother sweet, supernal,—
Unto us Elected Queen,
   Peer of Gods Eternal!
      Light clouds are circling
         Around her splendor,—
      Penitent women
         Of natures tender,
      Her knees embracing,
         Ether respiring,
         Mercy requiring!
   Thou, in immaculate ray,
      Mercy not leavest,
   And the lightly led astray,
      Who trust thee, receivest!

In their weakness fallen at length,
Hard it is to save them:
Who can crush, by native strength,
Vices that enslave them?
Whose the foot that may not slip
On the surface slanting?
Whom befool not eye and lip,
Breath and voice enchanting?

The Mater Gloriosa *soars into the space*

CHORUS OF WOMEN PENITENTS

To heights thou'rt speeding
Of endless Eden:
Receive our pleading,
Transcendent Maiden,
With mercy laden!

MAGNA PECCATRIX [*St. Luke*, vii. 36]

By the love before him kneeling,—
Him, thy Son, a Godlike vision;
By the tears like balsam stealing,
Spite of Pharisees' derision;
By the box, whose ointment precious
Shed its spice and odors cheery;
By the locks, whose softest meshes
Dried the holy feet and weary!—

MULIER SAMARITANA [*St. John*, iv.]

By that well, the ancient station
Whither Abram's flocks were driven;
By the jar, whose restoration
To the Savior's lips was given;
By the fountain pure and vernal,
Thence its present bounty spending,—
Overflowing, bright, eternal,
Watering the worlds unending!—

MARIA ÆGYPTIACA [*Acta Sanctorum*]

By the place where the immortal
Body of the Lord hath lain;
By the arm which, from the portal,
Warning, thrust me back again;
By the forty years' repentance
In the lonely desert land;

By the blissful farewell sentence
Which I wrote upon the sand!—

THE THREE

Thou thy presence not deniest
Unto sinful women ever,—
Liftest them to win the highest
Gain of penitent endeavor,—
So, from this good soul withdraw not—
Who but once forgot, transgressing,
Who her loving error saw not—
Pardon adequate, and blessing!

UNA PŒNITENTIUM

[*Formerly named Margaret, stealing closer*]

Incline, O Maiden,
With mercy laden,
In light unfading,
Thy gracious countenance upon my bliss!
My loved, my lover,
His trials over
In yonder world, returns to me in this!

BLESSED BOYS

[*Approaching in hovering circles*]

With mighty limbs he towers
Already above us;
He, for this love of ours,
Will richlier love us.
Early were we removed,
Ere Life could reach us;
Yet he hath learned and proved,
And he will teach us.

THE PENITENT

[*Formerly named Margaret*]

The spirit choir around him seeing,
New to himself, he scarce divines
His heritage of new-born Being,
When like the Holy Host he shines.
Behold, how he each band hath cloven
The earthly life had round him thrown,

And through his garb, of ether woven,
The early force of youth is shown!
Vouchsafe to me that I instruct him!
Still dazzles him the Day's new glare.

MATER GLORIOSA

Rise thou to higher spheres! Conduct him,
Who, feeling thee, shall follow there!

DOCTOR MARIANUS

[*Prostrate, adoring*]

Penitents, look up, elate,
Where she beams salvation;
Gratefully to blessed fate
Grow, in re-creation!
Be our souls, as they have been,
Dedicate to thee!
Virgin Holy, Mother, Queen,
Goddess, gracious be!

CHORUS MYSTICUS

All things transitory
But as symbols are sent:
Earth's insufficiency
Here grows to Event:
The Indescribable,
Here it is done:
The Woman Soul leadeth us
Upward and on!

MIGNON'S LOVE AND LONGING

From ‹Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship.› Carlyle's Translation

NOTHING is more touching than the first disclosure of a love which has been nursed in silence; of a faith grown strong in secret, and which at last comes forth in the hour of need and reveals itself to him who formerly has reckoned it of small account. The bud which had been closed so long and firmly was now ripe to burst its swathings, and Wilhelm's heart could never have been readier to welcome the impressions of affection.

She stood before him, and noticed his disquietude. «Master!» she cried, «if thou art unhappy, what will become of Mignon?» «Dear little creature,» said he, taking her hands, «thou too art part of my anxieties. I must go hence.» She looked at his eyes, glistening with restrained tears, and knelt down with vehemence before him. He kept her hands; she laid her head upon his knees, and remained quite still. He played with her hair, patted her, and spoke kindly to her. She continued motionless for a considerable time. At last he felt a sort of palpitating movement in her, which began very softly, and then by degrees, with increasing violence, diffused itself over all her frame. «What ails thee, Mignon?» cried he; «what ails thee?» She raised her little head, looked at him, and all at once laid her hand upon her heart, with the countenance of one repressing the utterance of pain. He raised her up, and she fell upon his breast; he pressed her towards him, and kissed her. She replied not by any pressure of the hand, by any motion whatever. She held firmly against her heart; and all at once gave a cry, which was accompanied by spasmodic movements of the body. She started up, and immediately fell down before him, as if broken in every joint. It was an excruciating moment! «My child!» cried he, raising her up and clasping her fast,—«my child, what ails thee?» The palpitations continued, spreading from the heart over all the lax and powerless limbs; she was merely hanging in his arms. All at once she again became quite stiff, like one enduring the sharpest corporeal agony; and soon with a new vehemence all her frame once more became alive, and she threw herself about his neck, like a bent spring that is closing; while in her soul, as it were, a strong rent took place, and at the same moment a stream of tears flowed from her shut eyes into his bosom. He held her fast. She wept, and no tongue can express the force of these tears. Her long hair had loosened, and was hanging down before her; it seemed as if her whole being was melting incessantly into a brook of tears. Her rigid limbs were again become relaxed; her inmost soul was pouring itself forth; in the wild confusion of the moment, Wilhelm was afraid she would dissolve in his arms, and leave nothing there for him to grasp. He held her faster and faster. «My child!» cried he, «my child! thou art indeed mine, if that word can comfort thee. Thou art mine! I will keep thee, I will never forsake thee!» Her tears continued flowing. At last she raised herself; a faint gladness shone upon her face. «My father!» cried she, «thou wilt not forsake me? Wilt be my father? I am thy child!»

Softly, at this moment, the harp began to sound before the door; the old man brought his most affecting songs as an evening offering to our friend, who, holding his child ever faster in his arms, enjoyed the most pure and undescribable felicity.

«Know'st thou the land where citron-apples bloom,
And oranges like gold in leafy gloom,
A gentle wind from deep-blue heaven blows,
The myrtle thick, and high the laurel grows?
Know'st thou it then?
'Tis there! 'Tis there,
O my true loved one, thou with me must go!

«Know'st thou the house, its porch with pillars tall?
The rooms do glitter, glitters bright the hall,
And marble statues stand, and look each one:
What's this, poor child, to thee they've done?
Know'st thou it then?
'Tis there! 'Tis there,
O my protector, thou with me must go!

«Know'st thou the hill, the bridge that hangs on cloud?
The mules in mist grope o'er the torrent loud,
In caves lie coiled the dragon's ancient brood,
The crag leaps down, and over it the flood:
Know'st thou it then?
'Tis there! 'Tis there
Our way runs: O my father, wilt thou go?»

Next morning, on looking for Mignon about the house, Wilhelm did not find her, but was informed that she had gone out early with Melina, who had risen betimes to receive the wardrobe and other apparatus of his theatre.

After the space of some hours, Wilhelm heard the sound of music before his door. At first he thought it was the harper come again to visit him; but he soon distinguished the tones of a cithern, and the voice which began to sing was Mignon's. Wilhelm opened the door; the child came in, and sang him the song we have just given above.

The music and general expression of it pleased our friend extremely, though he could not understand all the words. He made her once more repeat the stanzas, and explain them; he wrote them down, and translated them into his native language. But the originality of its turns he could imitate only from afar: its childlike innocence of expression vanished from it in the process of reducing its broken phraseology to uniformity, and combining its disjointed parts. The charm of the tune, moreover, was entirely incomparable.

She began every verse in a stately and solemn manner, as if she wished to draw attention towards something wonderful, as if she had something weighty to communicate. In the third line, her tones became deeper and gloomier; the «Know'st thou it then?» was uttered with a show of mystery and eager circumspectness; in the «'Tis there! 'Tis there!» lay a boundless longing; and her «With me must go!» she modified at each repetition, so that now it appeared to entreat and implore, now to impel and persuade.

On finishing her song for the second time, she stood silent for a moment, looked keenly at Wilhelm, and asked him, «*Know'st* thou the land?» «It must mean Italy,» said Wilhelm: «where didst thou get the little song?» «Italy!» said Mignon, with an earnest air. «If thou go to Italy, take me along with thee; for I am too cold here.» «Hast thou been there already, little dear?» said Wilhelm. But the child was silent, and nothing more could be got out of her.

WILHELM MEISTER'S INTRODUCTION TO SHAKESPEARE

From ‹Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship.› Carlyle's Translation

«HAVE you never,» said Jarno, taking him aside, «read one of Shakespeare's plays?»

«No,» replied Wilhelm: «since the time when they became more known in Germany, I have myself grown unacquainted with the theatre; and I know not whether I should now rejoice that an old taste and occupation of my youth, has been by chance renewed. In the mean time, all that I have heard of these plays has excited little wish to become acquainted with such extraordinary monsters, which appear to set probability and dignity alike at defiance.»

«I would advise you,» said the other, «to make a trial, notwithstanding: it can do one no harm to look at what is extraordinary with one's own eyes. I will lend you a volume or two; and you cannot better spend your time than by casting everything aside, and retiring to the solitude of your old habitation, to look into the magic lantern of that unknown world. It is sinful of you to waste your hours in dressing out these apes to look more human, and teaching dogs to dance. One thing only I require,—you must not cavil at the form; the rest I can leave to your own good sense and feeling.»

The horses were standing at the door; and Jarno mounted with some other cavaliers, to go and hunt. Wilhelm looked after him with sadness. He would fain have spoken much with this man who though in a harsh, unfriendly way, gave him new ideas,—ideas that he had need of.

Oftentimes a man, when approaching some development of his powers, capacities, and conceptions, gets into a perplexity from which a prudent friend might easily deliver him. He resembles a traveler, who, at but a short distance from the inn he is to rest at, falls into the water: were any one to catch him then and pull him to the bank, with one good wetting it were over; whereas, though he struggles out himself, it is often at the side where he tumbled in, and he has to make a wide and weary circuit before reaching his appointed object.

Wilhelm now began to have an inkling that things went forward in the world differently from what he had supposed. He now viewed close at hand the solemn and imposing life of the great and distinguished, and wondered at the easy dignity which they contrived to give it. An army on its march, a princely hero at the head of it, such a multitude of co-operating warriors, such a multitude of crowding worshipers, exalted his imagination. In this mood he received the promised books; and ere long, as may be easily supposed, the stream of that mighty genius laid hold of him and led him down to a shoreless ocean, where he soon completely forgot and lost himself. . . .

Wilhelm had scarcely read one or two of Shakespeare's plays, till their effect on him became so strong that he could go no further. His whole soul was in commotion. He sought an opportunity to speak with Jarno; to whom, on meeting with him, he expressed his boundless gratitude for such delicious entertainment.

«I clearly enough foresaw,» said Jarno, «that you would not remain insensible to the charms of the most extraordinary and most admirable of all writers.»

«Yes!» exclaimed our friend: «I cannot recollect that any book, any man, any incident of my life, has produced such important effects on me, as the precious works to which by your kindness I have been directed. They seem as if they were performances of some celestial genius descending among men, to make them by the mildest instructions acquainted with themselves. They are no fictions! You would think, while reading them, you stood before the inclosed awful Books of Fate, while the whirlwind of most impassioned life was howling through the leaves, and tossing them fiercely to and fro. The strength and tenderness, the power and peacefulness of this man, have so astonished and transported me, that I long vehemently for the time when I shall have it in my power to read further.»

«Bravo!» said Jarno, holding out his hand, and squeezing our friend's. «This is as it should be! And the consequences which I hope for will likewise surely follow.»

«I wish,» said Wilhelm, «I could but disclose to you all that is going on within me even now. All the anticipations I have ever had regarding man and his destiny, which have accompanied me from youth upwards often unobserved by myself, I find developed and fulfilled in Shakespeare's writings. It seems as if he cleared up every one of our enigmas to us, though we cannot say, Here or there is the word of solution. His men appear like natural men, and yet they are not. These, the most mysterious and complex productions of creation, here act before us as if they were watches, whose dial-plates and cases were of crystal, which pointed out according to their use the course of the hours and minutes; while at the same time you could discern the combination of wheels and springs that turn them. The few glances I have cast over Shakespeare's world incite me, more than anything beside, to quicken my footsteps forward into the actual world, to mingle in the flood of destinies that is suspended over it; and at length, if I shall prosper, to draw a few cups from the great ocean of true nature, and to distribute them from off the stage among the thirsting people of my native land.»

WILHELM MEISTER'S ANALYSIS OF HAMLET

From ‹Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship›

Seeing the company so favorably disposed, Wilhelm now hoped he might further have it in his power to converse with them on the poetic merit of the pieces which might come before them. « It is not enough,» said he next day, when they were all again assembled, « for the actor merely to glance over a dramatic work, to judge of it by his first impression, and thus without investigation to declare his satisfaction or dissatisfaction with it. Such things may be allowed in a spectator, whose purpose it is rather to be entertained and moved than formally to criticize. But the actor, on the other hand, should be prepared to give a reason for his praise or censure: and how shall he do this if he have not taught himself to penetrate the sense, the views, and feelings of his author? A common error is, to form a judgment of a drama from a single part in it; and to look upon this part itself in an isolated point of view, not in its connection with the whole. I have noticed this within a few days so clearly in my own conduct, that I will give you the account as an example, if you please to hear me patiently.

« You all know Shakespeare's incomparable ‹ Hamlet ›: our public reading of it at the Castle yielded every one of us the greatest satisfaction. On that occasion we proposed to act the piece; and I, not knowing what I undertook, engaged to play the Prince's part. This I conceived that I was studying, while I began to get by heart the strongest passages, the soliloquies, and those scenes in which force of soul, vehemence, and elevation of feeling have the freest scope; where the agitated heart is allowed to display itself with touching expressiveness.

« I further conceived that I was penetrating quite into the spirit of the character, while I endeavored as it were to take upon myself the load of deep melancholy under which my prototype was laboring, and in this humor to pursue him through the strange labyrinths of his caprices and his singularities. Thus learning, thus practicing, I doubted not but I should by-and-by become one person with my hero.

« But the farther I advanced, the more difficult did it become for me to form any image of the whole, in its general bearings; till at last it seemed as if impossible. I next went through the entire piece, without interruption; but here too I found much that I could not away with. At one time the characters, at another time the manner of displaying them, seemed inconsistent; and I almost despaired of finding any general tint, in which I might present my whole part with all its shadings and variations. In such devious paths I toiled, and wandered long in vain; till at length a hope arose that I might reach my aim in quite a new way.

"I set about investigating every trace of Hamlet's character, as it had shown itself before his father's death: I endeavored to distinguish what in it was independent of this mournful event; independent of the terrible events that followed; and what most probably the young man would have been, had no such thing occurred.

"Soft, and from a noble stem, this royal flower had sprung up under the immediate influences of majesty; the idea of moral rectitude with that of princely elevation, the feeling of the good and dignified with the consciousness of high birth, had in him been unfolded simultaneously. He was a prince, by birth a prince; and he wished to reign, only that good men might be good without obstruction. Pleasing in form, polished by nature, courteous from the heart, he was meant to be the pattern of youth and the joy of the world.

"Without any prominent passion, his love for Ophelia was a still presentiment of sweet wants. His zeal in knightly accomplishments was not entirely his own; it needed to be quickened and inflamed by praise bestowed on others for excelling in them. Pure in sentiment, he knew the honorable-minded, and could prize the rest which an upright spirit tastes on the bosom of a friend. To a certain degree, he had learned to discern and value the good and the beautiful in arts and sciences; the mean, the vulgar was offensive to him: and if hatred could take root in his tender soul, it was only so far as to make him properly despise the false and changeful insects of a court, and play with them in easy scorn. He was calm in his temper, artless in his conduct, neither pleased with idleness nor too violently eager for employment. The routine of a university he seemed to continue when at court. He possessed more mirth of humor than of heart; he was a good companion, pliant, courteous, discreet, and able to forget and forgive an injury, yet never able to unite himself with those who overstept the limits of the right, the good, and the becoming.

«When we read the piece again, you shall judge whether I am yet on the proper track. I hope at least to bring forward passages that shall support my opinion in its main points.»

This delineation was received with warm approval; the company imagined they foresaw that Hamlet's manner of proceeding might now be very satisfactorily explained; they applauded this method of penetrating into the spirit of a writer. Each of them proposed to himself to take up some piece, and study it on these principles, and so unfold the author's meaning. . . .

Loving Shakespeare as our friend did, he failed not to lead round the conversation to the merits of that dramatist. Expressing, as he entertained, the liveliest hopes of the new epoch which these exquisite productions must form in Germany, he ere long introduced his 'Hamlet,' who had busied him so much of late.

Serlo declared that he would long ago have played the piece, had this been possible, and that he himself would willingly engage to act Polonius. He added with a smile, «An Ophelia too will certainly turn up, if we had but a Prince.»

Wilhelm did not notice that Aurelia seemed a little hurt at her brother's sarcasm. Our friend was in his proper vein, becoming copious and didactic, expounding how he would have 'Hamlet' played. He circumstantially delivered to his hearers the opinions we before saw him busied with; taking all the trouble possible to make his notion of the matter acceptable, skeptical as Serlo showed himself regarding it. «Well then,» said the latter finally, «suppose we grant you all this, what will you explain by it?»

«Much, everything,» said Wilhelm. «Conceive a prince such as I have painted him, and that his father suddenly dies. Ambition and the love of rule are not the passions that inspire him. As a king's son, he would have been contented; but now he is first constrained to consider the difference which separates a sovereign from a subject. The crown was not hereditary; yet a longer possession of it by his father would have strengthened the pretensions of an only son, and secured his hopes of the succession. In place of this, he now beholds himself excluded by his uncle, in spite of specious promises, most probably forever. He is now poor in goods and favor, and a stranger in the scene which from youth he had looked upon as his inheritance. His temper here assumes its first mournful tinge. He feels that now he is not more, that he is less, than a private nobleman; he offers himself as the servant of every one; he is not courteous and condescending, he is needy and degraded.

« His past condition he remembers as a vanished dream. It is in vain that his uncle strives to cheer him, to present his situation in another point of view. The feeling of his nothingness will not leave him.

« The second stroke that came upon him wounded deeper, bowed still more. It was the marriage of his mother. The faithful tender son had yet a mother, when his father passed away. He hoped in the company of his surviving, noble-minded parent, to reverence the heroic form of the departed; but his mother too he loses, and it is something worse than death that robs him of her. The trustful image which a good child loves to form of its parents is gone. With the dead there is no help; on the living no hold. She also is a woman, and her name is Frailty, like that of all her sex.

« Now first does he feel himself completely bent and orphaned; and no happiness of life can repay what he has lost. Not reflective or sorrowful by nature, reflection and sorrow have become for him a heavy obligation. It is thus that we see him first enter on the scene. I do not think that I have mixed aught foreign with the piece, or overcharged a single feature of it.»

Serlo looked at his sister and said, « Did I give thee a false picture of our friend? He begins well; he has still many things to tell us, many to persuade us of.» Wilhelm asseverated loudly that he meant not to persuade but to convince; he begged for another moment's patience.

« Figure to yourselves this youth,» cried he, « this son of princes; conceive him vividly, bring his state before your eyes, and then observe him when he learns that his father's spirit walks; stand by him in the terrors of the night, when the venerable ghost itself appears before him. A horrid shudder passes over him; he speaks to the mysterious form; he sees it beckon him; he follows it, and hears. The fearful accusation of his uncle rings in his ears; the summons to revenge, and the piercing oft-repeated prayer, Remember me!

« And when the ghost has vanished, who is it that stands before us? A young hero panting for vengeance? A prince by birth, rejoicing to be called to punish the usurper of his crown? No! trouble and astonishment take hold of the solitary young man; he grows bitter against smiling villains, swears that he will not forget the spirit, and concludes with the significant ejaculation:—

> «‘The time is out of joint: O cursed spite,
> That ever I was born to set it right!’

«In these words, I imagine, will be found the key to Hamlet's whole procedure. To me it is clear that Shakespeare meant, in the present case, to represent the effects of a great action laid upon a soul unfit for the performance of it. In this view the whole piece seems to me to be composed. There is an oak-tree planted in a costly jar, which should have borne only pleasant flowers in its bosom; the roots expand, the jar is shivered.

«A lovely, pure, noble, and most moral nature, without the strength of nerve which forms a hero, sinks beneath a burden which it cannot bear and must not cast away. All duties are holy for him; the present is too hard. Impossibilities have been required of him, not in themselves impossibilities, but such for him. He winds, and turns, and torments himself; he advances and recoils; is ever put in mind, ever puts himself in mind; at last does all but lose his purpose from his thoughts; yet still without recovering his peace of mind.»

Aurelia seemed to give but little heed to what was passing; at last she conducted Wilhelm to another room, and going to the window, and looking out at the starry sky she said to him, «You have still much to tell us about Hamlet; I will not hurry you; my brother must hear it as well as I; but let me beg to know your thoughts about Ophelia.»

«Of her there cannot much be said,» he answered; «for a few master strokes complete her character. The whole being of Ophelia floats in sweet and ripe sensation. Kindness for the Prince, to whose hand she may aspire, flows so spontaneously, her tender heart obeys its impulses so unresistingly, that both father and brother are afraid; both give her warning harshly and directly. Decorum, like the thin lawn upon her bosom, cannot hide the soft, still movements of her heart; it on the contrary betrays them. Her fancy is smit; her silent modesty breathes amiable desire; and if the friendly goddess Opportunity should shake the tree, its fruit would fall.»

«And then,» said Aurelia, «when she beholds herself forsaken, cast away, despised; when all is inverted in the soul of her crazed lover, and the highest changes to the lowest, and instead of the sweet cup of love he offers her the bitter cup of woe—»

«Her heart breaks,» cried Wilhelm; «the whole structure of her being is loosened from its joinings; her father's death strikes fiercely against it; and the fair edifice altogether crumbles into fragments.» . . .

Serlo, at this moment entering, inquired about his sister; and looking in the book which our friend had hold of, cried, «So you are again at 'Hamlet'? Very good! Many doubts have arisen in me, which seem not a little to impair the canonical aspect of the piece as you would have it viewed. The English themselves have admitted that its chief interest concludes with the third act; the last two lagging sorrily on, and scarcely uniting with the rest: and certainly about the end it seems to stand stock still.»

«It is very possible,» said Wilhelm, «that some individuals of a nation which has so many masterpieces to feel proud of, may be led by prejudice and narrowness of mind to form false judgments; but this cannot hinder us from looking with our own eyes, and doing justice where we see it due. I am very far from censuring the plan of 'Hamlet': on the other hand, I believe there never was a grander one invented; nay, it is not invented, it is real.»

«How do you demonstrate that?» inquired Serlo.

«I will not demonstrate anything,» said Wilhelm; «I will merely show you what my own conceptions of it are.»

Aurelia rose up from her cushion, leaned upon her hand, and looked at Wilhelm; who, with the firmest assurance that he was in the right, went on as follows:—

«It pleases us, it flatters us to see a hero acting on his own strength; loving and hating as his heart directs him; undertaking and completing; casting every obstacle aside; and at length attaining some great object which he aimed at. Poets and historians would willingly persuade us that so proud a lot may fall to man. In 'Hamlet' we are taught another lesson: the hero is without a plan, but the piece is full of plan. Here we have no villain punished on some self-conceived and rigidly accomplished scheme of vengeance: a horrid deed occurs; it rolls itself along with all its consequences, dragging guiltless persons also in its course; the perpetrator seems as if he would evade the abyss which is made ready for him, yet he plunges in, at the very point by which he thinks he shall escape and happily complete his course.

« For it is the property of crime to extend its mischief over innocence, as it is of virtue to extend its blessings over many that deserve them not; while frequently the author of the one or of the other is not punished or rewarded at all. Here in this play of ours, how strange! The Pit of Darkness sends its spirit and demands revenge; in vain! All circumstances tend one way, and hurry to revenge; in vain! Neither earthly nor infernal thing may bring about what is reserved for Fate alone. The hour of judgment comes: the wicked falls with the good; one race is mowed away, that another may spring up.»

After a pause, in which they looked at one another, Serlo said: « You pay no great compliment to Providence, in thus exalting Shakespeare; and besides, it appears to me that for the honor of your poet, as others for the honor of Providence, you ascribe to him an object and a plan which he himself had never thought of.»

« Let me also put a question,» said Aurelia. « I have looked at Ophelia's part again; I am contented with it, and conceive that under certain circumstances I could play it. But tell me, should not the poet have furnished the insane maiden with another sort of songs? Could not one select some fragments out of melancholy ballads for this purpose? What have double meanings and lascivious insipidities to do in the mouth of such a noble-minded person?»

« Dear friend,» said Wilhelm, « even here I cannot yield you one iota. In these singularities, in this apparent impropriety, a deep sense is hid. Do we not understand from the very first what the mind of the good soft-hearted girl was busied with? Silently she lived within herself, yet she scarce concealed her wishes, her longing; the tones of desire were in secret ringing through her soul; and how often may she have attempted, like an unskillful nurse, to lull her senses to repose with songs which only kept them more awake? But at last, when her self-command is altogether gone, when the secrets of her heart are hovering on her tongue, that tongue betrays her; and in the innocence of insanity she solaces herself, unmindful of king or queen, with the echo of her loose and well-beloved songs, 'To-morrow is Saint Valentine's Day,' and 'By Gis and by Saint Charity.'

«I am much mistaken,» cried he, «if I have not now discovered how the whole is to be managed; nay, I am convinced that Shakespeare himself would have arranged it so, had not his mind been too exclusively directed to the ruling interest, and perhaps misled by the novels which furnished him with his materials.»

«Let us hear,» said Serlo, placing himself with an air of solemnity upon the sofa; «I will listen calmly, but judge with rigor.»

«I am not afraid of you,» said Wilhelm; «only hear me. In the composition of this play, after the most accurate investigation and the most mature reflection, I distinguish two classes of objects. The first are the grand internal relations of the persons and events, the powerful effects which arise from the characters and proceedings of the main figures: these, I hold, are individually excellent, and the order in which they are presented cannot be improved. No kind of interference must be suffered to destroy them, or even essentially to change their form. These are the things which stamp themselves deep into the soul; which all men long to see, which no one dares to meddle with. Accordingly, I understand, they have almost wholly been retained in all our German theatres.

«But our countrymen have erred, in my opinion, with regard to the second class of objects which may be observed in this tragedy: I allude to the external relations of the persons, whereby they are brought from place to place, or combined in various ways by certain accidental incidents. These they have looked upon as very unimportant; have spoken of them only in passing, or left them out altogether. Now indeed it must be owned that these threads are slack and slender; yet they run through the entire piece, and bind together much that would otherwise fall asunder, and does actually fall asunder when you cut them off, and imagine you have done enough and more if you have left the ends hanging.

«Among these external relations I include the disturbances in Norway, the war with young Fortinbras, the embassy to his uncle, the settling of that feud, the march of young Fortinbras to Poland, and his coming back at the end; of the same sort are Horatio's return from Wittenberg, Hamlet's wish to go thither, the journey of Laertes to France, his return, the dispatch of Hamlet into England, his capture by pirates, the death of the two courtiers by the letter which they carried. All these circumstances and events would be very fit for expanding and lengthening a novel; but here they injure exceedingly the unity of the piece,—particularly as the hero had no plan,—and are in consequence entirely out of place."

"For once in the right!" cried Serlo.

"Do not interrupt me," answered Wilhelm; "perhaps you will not always think me right. These errors are like temporary props of an edifice; they must not be removed till we have built a firm wall in their stead. My project therefore is, not at all to change those first-mentioned grand situations, or at least as much as possible to spare them, both collectively and individually; but with respect to these external, single, dissipated, and dissipating motives, to cast them all at once away, and substitute a solitary one instead of them."

"And this?" inquired Serlo, springing up from his recumbent posture.

"It lies in the piece itself," answered Wilhelm, "only I employ it rightly. There are disturbances in Norway. You shall hear my plan and try it.

"After the death of Hamlet the father, the Norwegians, lately conquered, grow unruly. The viceroy of that country sends his son Horatio, an old school friend of Hamlet's, and distinguished above every other for his bravery and prudence, to Denmark, to press forward the equipment of the fleet, which under the new luxurious King proceeds but slowly. Horatio has known the former King, having fought in his battles, having even stood in favor with him; a circumstance by which the first ghost scene will be nothing injured. The new sovereign gives Horatio audience, and sends Laertes into Norway with intelligence that the fleet will soon arrive, whilst Horatio is commissioned to accelerate the preparation of it; and the Queen, on the other hand, will not consent that Hamlet, as he wishes, should go to sea along with him."

"Heaven be praised!" cried Serlo; "we shall now get rid of Wittenberg and the university, which was always a sorry piece of business. I think your idea extremely good: for except these two distant objects, Norway and the fleet, the spectator will not be required to *fancy* anything: the rest he will *see;* the rest takes place before him; whereas his imagination, on the other plan, was hunted over all the world."

« You easily perceive, » said Wilhelm, « how I shall contrive to keep the other parts together. When Hamlet tells Horatio of his uncle's crime, Horatio counsels him to go to Norway in his company, to secure the affections of the army, and return in war-like force. Hamlet also is becoming dangerous to the King and Queen; they find no readier method of deliverance than to send him in the fleet, with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to be spies upon him: and as Laertes in the mean time comes from France, they determine that this youth, exasperated even to murder, shall go after him. Unfavorable winds detain the fleet; Hamlet returns: for his wandering through the church-yard perhaps some lucky motive may be thought of; his meeting with Laertes in Ophelia's grave is a grand moment, which we must not part with. After this, the King resolves that it is better to get quit of Hamlet on the spot: the festival of his departure, the pretended reconcilement with Laertes, are now solemnized; on which occasion knightly sports are held, and Laertes fights with Hamlet. Without the four corpses I cannot end the piece; not one of them can possibly be left. The right of popular election now again comes in force, and Hamlet gives his dying voice for Horatio. »

« Quick! quick! » said Serlo; « sit down and work the piece; your plan has my entire approbation; only do not let your zeal for it evaporate. » . . .

Wilhelm had already been for some time busied with translating Hamlet; making use, as he labored, of Wieland's spirited performance, by means of which he had first become acquainted with Shakespeare. What in Wieland's work had been omitted he replaced; and he had at length procured himself a complete version, at the very time when Serlo and he finally agreed about the way of treating it. He now began, according to his plan, to cut out and insert, to separate and unite, to alter and often to restore; for satisfied as he was with his own conception, it still appeared to him as if in executing it he were but spoiling the original.

So soon as all was finished, he read his work to Serlo and the rest. They declared themselves exceedingly contented with it; Serlo in particular made many flattering observations.

« You have felt very justly, » said he, among other things, « that some external circumstances must accompany this piece; but that they must be simpler than those which the great poet has employed. What takes place without the theatre — what the spectator does not see, but must imagine for himself — is like a background, in front of which the acting figures move. Your large and simple prospect of the fleet and Norway will very much improve the piece; if this were altogether taken from it, we should have but a family scene remaining; and the great idea, that here a kingly house by internal crimes and incongruities goes down to ruin, would not be presented with its proper dignity. But if the former background were left standing, so manifold, so fluctuating and confused, it would hurt the impression of the figures."

Wilhelm again took Shakespeare's part: alleging that he wrote for islanders, for Englishmen, who generally, in the distance, were accustomed to see little else than ships and voyages, the coast of France and privateers; and thus what perplexed and distracted others was to them quite natural.

Serlo assented; and both of them were of opinion that as the piece was now to be produced upon the German stage, this more serious and simple background was the best adapted for the German mind.

The parts had been distributed before: Serlo undertook Polonius; Aurelia undertook Ophelia; Laertes was already designated by his name; a young, thick-set, jolly new-comer was to be Horatio; the King and the Ghost alone occasioned some perplexity. For both of these was no one but Old Boisterous remaining. Serlo proposed to make the Pedant King; but against this our friend protested in the strongest terms. They could resolve on nothing.

Wilhelm also had allowed both Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to continue in his piece. "Why not compress them into one?" said Serlo. "This abbreviation will not cost you much."

"Heaven keep me from such curtailments!" answered Wilhelm; "they destroy at once the sense and the effect. What these two persons are and do it is impossible to represent by one. In such small matters we discover Shakespeare's greatness. These soft approaches, this smirking and bowing, this assenting, wheedling, flattering, this whisking agility, this wagging of the tail, this allness and emptiness, this legal knavery, this ineptitude and insipidity,— how can they be expressed by a single man? There ought to be at least a dozen of these people if they could be had, for it is only in society that they are anything; they are society itself; and Shakespeare showed no little wisdom and discernment in bringing in a pair of them. Besides, I need them as a couple that may be contrasted with the single, noble, excellent Horatio."

THE INDENTURE

From ‹Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship›

Art is long, life short, judgment difficult, opportunity transient. To act is easy, to think is hard; to act according to our thought is troublesome. Every beginning is cheerful; the threshold is the place of expectation. The boy stands astonished, his impressions guide him; he learns sportfully, seriousness comes on him by surprise. Imitation is born with us; what should be imitated is not easy to discover. The excellent is rarely found, more rarely valued. The height charms us, the steps to it do not; with the summit in our eye, we love to walk along the plain. It is but a part of art that can be taught; the artist needs it all. Who knows it half, speaks much and is always wrong; who knows it wholly, inclines to act and speaks seldom or late. The former have no secrets and no force; the instruction they can give is like baked bread, savory and satisfying for a single day; but flour cannot be sown, and seed corn ought not to be ground. Words are good, but they are not the best. The best is not to be explained by words. The spirit in which we act is the highest matter. Action can be understood and again represented by the spirit alone. No one knows what he is doing while he acts aright; but of what is wrong we are always conscious. Whoever works with symbols only is a pedant, a hypocrite, or a bungler. There are many such, and they like to be together. Their babbling detains the scholar; their obstinate mediocrity vexes even the best. The instruction which the true artist gives us opens the mind; for where words fail him, deeds speak. The true scholar learns from the known to unfold the unknown, and approaches more and more to being a master.

THE HARPER'S SONGS

From ‘Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship’

“What notes are those without the wall,
Across the portal sounding?
Let's have the music in our hall,
Back from its roof rebounding.”
So spoke the king: the henchman flies;
His answer heard, the monarch cries,
“Bring in that ancient minstrel.”

“Hail, gracious king, each noble knight!
Each lovely dame, I greet you!
What glittering stars salute my sight!
What heart unmoved may meet you!
Such lordly pomp is not for me,
Far other scenes my eyes must see:
Yet deign to list my harping.”

The singer turns him to his art,
A thrilling strain he raises;
Each warrior hears with glowing heart
And on his loved one gazes.
The king, who liked his playing well,
Commands, for such a kindly spell,
A golden chain be given him.

“The golden chain give not to me:
Thy boldest knight may wear it,
Who 'cross the battle's purple sea
On lion breast may bear it;
Or let it be thy chancellor's prize,
Amid his heaps to feast his eyes,—
Its yellow glance will please him.

“I sing but as the linnet sings,
That on the green bough dwelleth;
A rich reward his music brings,
As from his throat it swelleth:
Yet might I ask, I'd ask of thine
One sparkling draught of purest wine
To drink it here before you.”

He viewed the wine, he quaffed it up:
“O draught of sweetest savor!

O happy house, where such a cup
   Is thought a little favor!
If well you fare, remember me,
And thank kind Heaven, from envy free,
   As now for this I thank you."

Who never ate his bread in sorrow,
   Who never spent the darksome hours
Weeping and watching for the morrow,—
   He knows ye not, ye gloomy Powers.

To earth, this weary earth, ye bring us,
   To guilt ye let us heedless go,
Then leave repentance fierce to wring us;
   A moment's guilt, an age of woe!

MIGNON'S SONG

From 'Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship'

Such let me seem, till such I be;
   Take not my snow-white dress away!
Soon from this dusk of earth I flee,
   Up to the glittering lands of day.

There first a little space I rest,
   Then wake so glad, to scenes so kind;
In earthly robes no longer drest,
   This band, this girdle left behind.

And those calm shining sons of morn,
   They ask not who is maid or boy;
No robes, no garments there are worn,
   Our body pure from sin's alloy.

Through little life not much I toiled,
   Yet anguish long this heart has wrung,
Untimely woe my blossoms spoiled:
   Make me again forever young!

PHILINA'S SONG

From ‹Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship›

SING me not with such emotion
How the night so lonesome is;
Pretty maids, I've got a notion
It is the reverse of this.

For as wife and man are plighted,
And the better half the wife,
So is night to day united,—
Night's the better half of life.

Can you joy in bustling daytime,—
Day, when none can get his will?
It is good for work, for haytime;
For much other it is ill.

But when in the nightly glooming,
Social lamp on table glows,
Face for faces dear illuming,
And such jest and joyance goes;

When the fiery pert young fellow,
Wont by day to run or ride,
Whispering now some tale would tell O,—
All so gentle by your side;

When the nightingale to lovers
Lovingly her songlet sings,
Which for exiles and sad rovers
Like mere woe and wailing rings;

With a heart how lightsome-feeling
Do ye count the kindly clock,
Which, twelve times deliberate pealing,
Tells you none to-night shall knock!

Therefore, on all fit occasions,
Mark it, maidens, what I sing:
Every day its own vexations,
And the night its joys will bring.

PROMETHEUS

Blacken thy heavens, Jove,
With thunder-clouds,
And exercise thee, like a boy
Who thistles crops,
With smiting oaks and mountain-tops:
Yet must leave me standing
My own firm earth;
Must leave my cottage, which thou didst not build,
And my warm hearth,
Whose cheerful glow
Thou enviest me.

I know naught more pitiful
Under the sun, than you, gods!
Ye nourish scantily
With altar taxes
And with cold lip-service,
This your majesty;—
Would perish, were not
Children and beggars
Credulous fools.

When I was a child,
And knew not whence or whither,
I would turn my 'wildered eye
To the sun, as if up yonder were
An ear to hear to my complaining—
A heart, like mine,
On the oppressed to feel compassion.

Who helped me
When I braved the Titans' insolence?
Who rescued me from death,
From slavery?
Hast thou not all thyself accomplished,
Holy-glowing heart?
And, glowing, young, and good,
Most ignorantly thanked
The slumberer above there?

I honor thee! For what?
Hast thou the miseries lightened
Of the down-trodden?

Hast thou the tears ever banished
From the afflicted?
Have I not to manhood been molded
By omnipotent Time,
And by Fate everlasting,
My lords and thine?

Dreamedst thou ever
I should grow weary of living,
And fly to the desert,
Since not all our
Pretty dream buds ripen?

Here sit I, fashion men
In mine own image,—
A race to be like me,
To weep and to suffer,
To be happy and enjoy themselves,
To be careless of *thee* too,
As I!

Translation of John S. Dwight.

WANDERER'S NIGHT SONGS

Thou that from the heavens art,
Every pain and sorrow stillest,
And the doubly wretched heart
Doubly with refreshment fillest,
I am weary with contending!
Why this rapture and unrest?
Peace descending,
Come, ah come into my breast!

O'er all the hill-tops
Is quiet now,
In all the tree-tops
Hearest thou
Hardly a breath;
The birds are asleep in the trees:
Wait; soon like these
Thou too shalt rest.

Longfellow's Translation. Reprinted by permission of Houghton, Mifflin & Co., publishers, Boston

THE ELFIN-KING

Who rides so late through the midnight blast?
'Tis a father spurs on with his child full fast;
He gathers the boy well into his arm,
He clasps him close and he keeps him warm.

«My son, why thus to my arm dost cling?»—
«Father, dost thou not see the elfin-king?
The elfin-king with his crown and train!»—
«My son, 'tis a streak of the misty rain!»

«Come hither, thou darling, come, go with me!
Fine games I know that I'll play with thee;
Flowers many and bright do my kingdoms hold,
My mother has many a robe of gold.»

«O father, dear father, and dost thou not hear
What the elfin-king whispers so low in mine ear?»—
«Calm, calm thee, my boy, it is only the breeze,
As it rustles the withered leaves under the trees.»

«Wilt thou go, bonny boy, wilt thou go with me?
My daughters shall wait on thee daintily;
My daughters around thee in dance shall sweep,
And rock thee and kiss thee and sing thee to sleep.»

«O father, dear father, and dost thou not mark
The elf-king's daughters move by in the dark?»—
«I see it, my child; but it is not they,
'Tis the old willow nodding its head so gray.»

«I love thee! thy beauty it charms me so;
And I'll take thee by force, if thou wilt not go!»
«O father, dear father, he's grasping me,—
My heart is as cold as cold can be!»

The father rides swiftly,—with terror he gasps,—
The sobbing child in his arms he clasps;
He reaches the castle with spurring and dread;
But alack! in his arms the child lay dead!

Translation of Martin and Aytoun.

FROM ‹THE WANDERER'S STORM SONG›

Whom thou desertest not, O Genius,
Neither blinding rain nor storm
Breathes upon his heart a chill.
Whom thou desertest not, O Genius,
To the lowering clouds,
To the beating hail,
He will sing cheerly,
As the lark there,
Thou that soarest.

Whom thou desertest not, O Genius,
Him thou'lt lift o'er miry places
On thy flaming pinions:
He will traverse
As on feet of flowers
Slime of Deucalion's deluge;
Slaying Python, strong, great,
Pythius Apollo!

Whom thou desertest not, O Genius,
Thou wilt spread thy downy wings beneath him,
When he sleeps upon the crags;
Thou wilt cover him with guardian pinions
In the midnight forest depths.

Whom thou desertest not, O Genius,
Thou wilt in whirling snow-storm
Warmly wrap him round;
To the warmth fly the Muses,
To the warmth fly the Graces.

Around me float, ye Muses,
And float, ye Graces!
This is water, this is earth
And the son of water and of earth,
Over whom I wander
Like the gods.

You are pure like the heart of water,
You are pure like the core of earth,
You float around me, and I float
Over water, over earth,
Like the gods.

Translation of Charles Harvey Genung.

THE GODLIKE

NOBLE be Man,
Helpful and good!
For that alone
Doth distinguish him
From all the beings
Which we know.

Hail to the Unknown, the
Higher Beings
Felt within us!
His pattern teach us
Faith in them!

For unfeeling
Is Nature:
Still shineth the sun
Over good and evil;
And to the sinner
Smile, as to the best,
The moon and the stars.

Wind and waters,
Thunder and hailstones,
Rustle on their way,
Smiting down as
They dash along,
One for another.

Just so does Fate
Grope round in the crowd,
Seize now the innocent,
Curly-haired boy,
Now on the old, bald
Crown of the villain.

By great adamantine
Laws everlasting,
Here we must all our
Round of existence
Faithfully finish.

There can none but Man
Perform the Impossible.
He understandeth,

Chooseth, and judgeth;
He can impart to the
Moment duration.

He alone may
The Good reward,
The Guilty punish,
Mend and deliver;
All the wayward, anomalous
Bind in the Useful.

And the Immortals —
Them we reverence,
As if they were men, and
Did, on a grand scale,
What the best man in little
Does, or fain would do.

Let noble Man
Be helpful and good!
Ever creating
The Right and the Useful —
Type of those loftier
Beings of whom the heart whispers!

Translation of John S. Dwight.

SOLITUDE

O ye kindly nymphs, who dwell 'mongst the rocks and the thickets,
Grant unto each whatsoever he may in silence desire!
Comfort impart to the mourner, and give to the doubter instruction,
And let the lover rejoice, finding the bliss that he craves.
For from the gods ye received what they ever denied unto mortals,
Power to comfort and aid all who in you may confide.

Translation of E. A. Bowring.

ERGO BIBAMUS!

For a praiseworthy object we're now gathered here,
So, brethren, sing Ergo bibamus!
Though talk may be hushed, yet the glasses ring clear:
Remember then, Ergo bibamus!
In truth 'tis an old, 'tis an excellent word;
With its sound so befitting each bosom is stirred,
And an echo the festal hall filling is heard,
A glorious Ergo bibamus!

I saw mine own love in her beauty so rare,
And bethought me of Ergo bibamus;
So I gently approached, and she let me stand there,
While I helped myself, thinking, Bibamus!
And when she's appeared, and will clasp you and kiss,
Or when those embraces and kisses ye miss,
Take refuge, till found is some worthier bliss,
In the comforting Ergo bibamus!

I am called by my fate far away from each friend;
Ye loved ones, then, Ergo bibamus!
With wallet light-laden from hence I must wend,
So double our Ergo bibamus!
Whate'er to his treasure the niggard may add,
Yet regard for the joyous will ever be had,
For gladness lends ever its charms to the glad,
So, brethren, sing: Ergo bibamus!

And what shall we say of to-day as it flies?
I thought but of Ergo bibamus!
'Tis one of those truly that seldom arise,
So again and again sing Bibamus!
For joy through a wide-open portal it guides,
Bright glitter the clouds as the curtain divides,
And a form, a divine one, to greet us in glides,
While we thunder our Ergo bibamus.

Translation of E. A. Bowring.

ALEXIS AND DORA

Farther and farther away, alas! at each moment the vessel
Hastens, as onward it glides, cleaving the foam-covered flood!
Long is the track plowed up by the keel where dolphins are sporting,
Following fast in its rear, while it seems flying pursuit.
All forebodes a prosperous voyage; the sailor with calmness
Leans 'gainst the sail, which alone all that is needed performs.
Forward presses the heart of each seaman, like colors and streamers;
Backward one only is seen, mournfully fixed near the mast,
While on the blue-tinged mountains, which fast are receding, he gazeth,
And as they sink in the sea, joy from his bosom departs.
Vanished from thee, too, O Dora, is now the vessel that robs thee
Of thine Alexis, thy friend,—ah, thy betrothèd as well!
Thou, too, art after me gazing in vain. Our hearts are still throbbing,
Though for each other, yet ah! 'gainst one another no more.
O thou single moment, wherein I found life! thou outweighest
Every day which had else coldly from memory fled.
'Twas in that moment alone, the last, that upon me descended
Life such as deities grant, though thou perceivèdst it not.
Phœbus, in vain with thy rays dost thou clothe the ether in glory:
Thine all-brightening day hateful alone is to me.
Into myself I retreat for shelter, and there in the silence
Strive to recover the time when she appeared with each day.
Was it possible beauty like this to see, and not feel it?
Worked not those heavenly charms e'en on a mind dull as thine?
Blame not thyself, unhappy one! Oft doth the bard an enigma
Thus propose to the throng, skillfully hidden in words;
Each one enjoys the strange commingling of images graceful,
Yet still is wanting the word which will discover the sense.
When at length it is found, the heart of each hearer is gladdened,
And in the poem he sees meaning of twofold delight.
Wherefore so late didst thou remove the bandage, O Amor,
Which thou hadst placed o'er mine eyes,—wherefore remove it so late?
Long did the vessel, when laden, lie waiting for favoring breezes,
Till in kindness the wind blew from the land o'er the sea.
Vacant times of youth! and vacant dreams of the future!
Ye all vanish, and naught, saving the moment, remains.
Yes! it remains,—my joy still remains! I hold thee, my Dora,
And thine image alone, Dora, by hope is disclosed.

Oft have I seen thee go, with modesty clad, to the temple,
  While thy mother so dear solemnly went by thy side.
Eager and nimble thou wert, in bearing thy fruit to the market,
  Boldly the pail from the well didst thou sustain on thy head.
Then was revealed thy neck, then seen thy shoulders so beauteous,
  Then, before all things, the grace filling thy motions was seen.
Oft have I feared that the pitcher perchance was in danger of falling,
  Yet it ever remained firm on the circular cloth.
Thus, fair neighbor, yes, thus I oft was wont to observe thee,
  As on the stars I might gaze, as I might gaze on the moon;
Glad indeed at the sight, yet feeling within my calm bosom
  Not the remotest desire ever to call them mine own.

Years thus fleeted away! Although our houses were only
  Twenty paces apart, yet I thy threshold ne'er crossed.
Now by the fearful flood are we parted! Thou liest to Heaven,
  Billow! thy beautiful blue seems to me dark as the night.
All were now in movement: a boy to the house of my father
  Ran at full speed and exclaimed, «Hasten thee quick to the strand!
Hoisted the sail is already, e'en now in the wind it is fluttering,
  While the anchor they weigh, heaving it up from the sand;
Come, Alexis, oh come!»—My worthy stout-hearted father
  Pressed, with a blessing, his hand down on my curly-locked head,
While my mother carefully reached me a newly made bundle;
  «Happy mayst thou return!» cried they—«both happy and rich!»
Then I sprang away, and under my arm held the bundle,
  Running along by the wall. Standing I found thee hard by,
At the door of thy garden. Thou smilingly saidst then, «Alexis!
  Say, are yon boisterous crew going thy comrades to be?
Foreign coasts wilt thou visit, and precious merchandise purchase,
  Ornaments meet for the rich matrons who dwell in the town;
Bring me also, I pray thee, a light chain; gladly I'll pay thee,
  Oft have I wished to possess some such a trinket as that.»
There I remained, and asked, as merchants are wont, with precision
  After the form and the weight which thy commission should have.
Modest indeed was the price thou didst name! I meanwhile was gazing
  On thy neck, which deserved ornaments worn but by queens.
Loudly now rose the cry from the ship; then kindly thou spakest:—
  «Take, I entreat thee, some fruit out of the garden, my friend!
Take the ripest oranges, figs of the whitest; the ocean
  Beareth no fruit, and in truth, 'tis not produced by each land.»
So I entered in. Thou pluckedst the fruit from the branches,
  And the burden of gold was in thine apron upheld.

Oft did I cry, Enough! But fairer fruits were still falling
Into thy hand as I spake, ever obeying thy touch.
Presently didst thou reach the arbor; there lay there a basket,
Sweet blooming myrtle-trees waved, as we drew nigh, o'er our heads.
Then thou began'st to arrange the fruit with skill and in silence:
First the orange, which heavy as though 'twere of gold,
Then the yielding fig, by the slightest pressure disfigured,
And with myrtle, the gift soon was both covered and graced.
But I raised it not up. I stood. Our eyes met together,
And my eyesight grew dim, seeming obscured by a film.
Soon I felt thy bosom on mine! Mine arm was soon twining
Round thy beautiful form; thousand times kissed I thy neck.
On my shoulder sank thy head; thy fair arms, encircling,
Soon rendered perfect the ring knitting a rapturous pair.
Amor's hands I felt; he pressed us together with ardor,
And from the firmament clear, thrice did it thunder; then tears
Streamed from mine eyes in torrents, thou weptest, I wept, both were weeping,
And 'mid our sorrow and bliss, even the world seemed to die.
Louder and louder they called from the strand; my feet would no longer
Bear my weight, and I cried:—«Dora! and art thou not mine?»
«Thine forever!» thou gently didst say. Then the tears we were shedding
Seemed to be wiped from our eyes, as by the breath of a god.
Nearer was heard the cry «Alexis!» The stripling who sought me
Suddenly peeped through the door. How he the basket snatched up!
How he urged me away! how pressed I thy hand! Dost thou ask me
How the vessel I reached? Drunken I seemed, well I know,
Drunken my shipmates believed me, and so had pity upon me;
And as the breeze drove us on, distance the town soon obscured.
«Thine forever!» thou, Dora, didst murmur; it fell on my senses
With the thunder of Zeus! while by the thunderer's throne
Stood his daughter, the goddess of Love; the Graces were standing
Close by her side! so the bond beareth an impress divine!
Oh then hasten, thou ship, with every favoring zephyr!
Onward, thou powerful keel, cleaving the waves as they foam!
Bring me unto the foreign harbor, so that the goldsmith
May in his workshop prepare straightway the heavenly pledge!
Ay, of a truth, the chain shall indeed be a chain, O my Dora!
Nine times encircling thy neck, loosely around it entwined.

Other and manifold trinkets I'll buy thee; gold-mounted bracelets,
Richly and skillfully wrought, also shall grace thy fair hand.
There shall the ruby and emerald vie, the sapphire so lovely
Be to the jacinth opposed, seeming its foil; while the gold
Holds all the jewels together, in beauteous union commingled.
Oh, how the bridegroom exults, when he adorns his betrothed!
Pearls if I see, of thee they remind me; each ring that is shown me
Brings to my mind thy fair hand's graceful and tapering form.
I will barter and buy; the fairest of all shalt thou choose thee;
Joyously would I devote all of the cargo to thee.
Yet not trinkets and jewels alone is thy loved one procuring;
With them he brings thee whate'er gives to a housewife delight:
Fine and woolen coverlets, wrought with an edging of purple,
Fit for a couch where we both, lovingly, gently may rest;
Costly pieces of linen. Thou sittest and sewest, and clothest
Me, and thyself, and perchance even a third with it too.
Visions of hope, deceive ye my heart! Ye kindly immortals,
Soften this fierce-raging flame, wildly pervading my breast!
Yet how I long to feel them again, those rapturous torments,
When in their stead, Care draws nigh, coldly and fearfully calm.
Neither the Furies' torch, nor the hounds of hell with their barking,
Awe the delinquent so much, down in the plains of despair,
As by the motionless spectre I'm awed, that shows me the fair one
Far away: of a truth, open the garden door stands!
And another one cometh! For him the fruit, too, is falling,
And for him also the fig strengthening honey doth yield!
Doth she entice him as well to the arbor? He follows? Oh, make me
Blind, ye Immortals! efface visions like this from my mind!
Yes, she is but a maiden! And she who to one doth so quickly
Yield, to another erelong, doubtless, will turn herself round.
Smile not, Zeus, for this once, at an oath so cruelly broken!
Thunder more fearfully! Strike!— Stay—thy fierce lightnings withhold!
Hurl at me thy quivering bolt! In the darkness of midnight
Strike with thy lightning this mast, make it a pitiful wreck!
Scatter the planks all around, and give to the boisterous billows
All these wares, and let *me* be to the dolphins a prey!—
Now, ye Muses, enough! In vain would ye strive to depicture
How, in a love-laden breast, anguish alternates with bliss.
Ye cannot heal the wounds, it is true, that love hath inflicted;
Yet from you only proceeds, kindly ones, comfort and balm.

Translation of E. A. Bowring.

MAXIMS AND REFLECTIONS

From ‹Maxims and Reflections of Goethe.› Translation of Bailey Saunders. Copyright 1892, by Macmillan & Co.

It is not always needful for truth to take a definite shape: it is enough if it hovers about us like a spirit and produces harmony; if it is wafted through the air like the sound of a bell, grave and kindly.

I must hold it for the greatest calamity of our time, which lets nothing come to maturity, that one moment is consumed by the next, and the day spent in the day; so that a man is always living from hand to mouth, without having anything to show for it. Have we not already newspapers for every hour of the day? A good head could assuredly intercalate one or other of them. They publish abroad everything that every one does, or is busy with or meditating; nay, his very designs are thereby dragged into publicity. No one can rejoice or be sorry, but as a pastime for others; and so it goes on from house to house, from city to city, from kingdom to kingdom, and at last from one hemisphere to the other,—all in post-haste.

During a prolonged study of the lives of various men both great and small, I came upon this thought: In the web of the world the one may well be regarded as the warp, the other as the woof. It is the little men, after all, who give breadth to the web, and the great men firmness and solidity; perhaps also the addition of some sort of pattern. But the scissors of the Fates determine its length, and to that all the rest must join in submitting itself.

There is nothing more odious than the majority: it consists of a few powerful men to lead the way; of accommodating rascals and submissive weaklings; and of a mass of men who trot after them without in the least knowing their own mind.

Translators are like busy match-makers: they sing the praises of some half-veiled beauty, and extol her charms, and arouse an irresistible longing for the original.

NATURE

NATURE! We are surrounded by her and locked in her clasp: powerless to leave her, and powerless to come closer to her. Unasked and unwarned she takes us up into the whirl of her dance, and hurries on with us till we are weary and fall from her arms.

There is constant life in her, motion and development; and yet she remains where she was. She is eternally changing, nor for a moment does she stand still. Of rest she knows nothing, and to all stagnation she has affixed her curse. She is steadfast; her step is measured, her exceptions rare, her laws immutable.

She loves herself, and clings eternally to herself with eyes and hearts innumerable. She has divided herself that she may be her own delight. She is ever making new creatures spring up to delight in her, and imparts herself insatiably.

She rejoices in illusion. If a man destroys this in himself and others, she punishes him like the hardest tyrant. If he follows her in confidence, she presses him to her heart as it were her child.

She spurts forth her creatures out of nothing, and tells them not whence they come and whither they go. They have only to go their way: she knows the path.

Her crown is Love. Only through Love can we come near her. She puts gulfs between all things, and all things strive to be interfused. She isolates everything, that she may draw everything together. With a few draughts from the cup of Love she repays for a life full of trouble.

She is all things. She rewards herself and punishes herself, and in herself rejoices and is distressed. She is rough and gentle, loving and terrible, powerless and almighty. In her everything is always present. Past or Future she knows not. The Present is her Eternity. She is kind. I praise her with all her works. She is wise and still. No one can force her to explain herself, or frighten her into a gift that she does not give willingly. She is crafty, but for a good end; and it is best not to notice her cunning.

NIKOLAI VASILIEVITCH GOGOL

(1809–1852)

BY ISABEL F. HAPGOOD

Gogol has been called the «father of modern Russian realism,» and he has been credited with the creation of all the types which we meet in the great novelists who followed him. This is in great measure true, especially so far as the male characters are concerned. The germs at least, if not the condensed characterization in full, are recognizable in Gogol's famous novel ‹Dead Souls,› his Little-Russian stories ‹Tales from a Farm-House near Dikanka› and ‹Mirgorod,› and his comedy ‹The Inspector,› which still holds the stage.

Nikolai Gogol

It was precisely because of his genius in seizing the national types that the poet Pushkin, one of Gogol's earliest and warmest admirers, gave to him the plans of ‹Dead Souls› and ‹The Inspector,› which he had intended to make use of himself. That he became the «father of Russian realism» was due not only to his own genius, but to the epoch in which he lived, though he solved the problem for himself quite independently of the Continental literatures which were undergoing the same process of transformation from romanticism to realism. For, nearly a hundred years before Gogol and his foreign contemporaries of the forties — the pioneers, in their respective countries, of the new literature — won the public, Europe had been living a sort of modern epic. In imitation of the ancient epics, writers portrayed heroes of gigantic powers in every direction, and set them in a framework of exceptional crises which aroused their powerful emotions in the cause of right, or their superhuman conflict with masterful persons or overwhelming woes. But the daily experience of those who suffered from the manifold miseries of battle and invasion in this modern epic epoch, made it impossible for them to disregard longer the claim on their sympathies of the common things and people of their world, though these can very easily be ignored when one reads the ancient epics. Thus did realism have its dawn in many lands when the era of peace gave men time to define their position, and when pseudo-classicism had at last palled on their taste, which had begun to recognize its coldness and inherent falsity.

Naturally, in this new quest of Truth, romanticism and realism were mingled at first. This was the case with Gogol-Yanovsky, to give him his full name. But he soon struck out in the right path. He was born and reared in Little Russia, at Sorotchinsky, government of Poltava. He was separated by only two generations from the epoch of the Zaporozhian Kazak army, whose life he has recorded in his famous historical novel ‘Taras Bulba,’ his grandfather having been regimental scribe of the Kazaks, an office of honor. The spirit of the Zaporozhian Kazaks still lingered over the land, which was overflowing with legends, and with fervent, childlike piety of the superstitious order. At least one half of the Little-Russian stories which made Gogol's fame he owes to his grandfather, who appears as Rudiy Panko the Bee-Farmer, in the ‘Tales from a Farm-House near Dikanka.’ His father, who represented the modern spirit, was an inimitable narrator of comic stories, and the talents of this father and grandfather rendered their house the social centre of a very wide neighborhood.

At school Gogol did not distinguish himself in his studies, but wrote a great deal, all of an imitative character, and got up school plays in emulation of those which he had seen at his own home. His lack of scholarship made it impossible for him to pursue the learned career of professor of history, on which he embarked after he had with labor obtained, and shortly renounced, the career of copying-clerk in St. Petersburg. His vast but dimly defined ambition to accomplish great things for his fatherland in some mysterious way, and fame for himself, equally suffered shipwreck to his mind; though if we consider the part which the realistic literature he founded has played on the world's stage, we may count his apparent defeat a solid victory. His brief career as professor of history at the university was brought about by his ambition, and through the influence of the literary men whose friendship he had won by his first ‘Little-Russian Tales.’ They recognized his genius, and at last he himself recognized that the new style of writing which he had created was his vocation, and devoted himself wholly to literature. At the close of 1831 the first volume of ‘Tales from a Farm-House’ appeared, and had an immense success. The second volume, ‘Mirgorod,’ followed, with equal success. It contained a new element: the merriment of the first volume had been pure, unmixed; in the second volume he had developed not only the realism but that special trait of his genius, “laughter piercing through a mist of tears,” of which ‘Old-Fashioned Gentry’ and ‘How the Two Ivans Quarreled’ offer celebrated examples. But success always flew to Gogol's head: he immediately began to despise these products of his true vocation, and to plan grandiose projects far beyond his powers of education and entirely outside the range of his talent. Now, for instance, he undertook a colossal work in nine volumes on the history of the Middle Ages. Happily, he abandoned that, after his studies of Little-Russian history incidental thereto had resulted in his epic of the highest art, 'Taras Bulba.'

The first outcome of his recognition that literary work was his moral duty, not a mere pastime, was his great play 'The Inspector.' It was produced in April, 1836. The authorities steadfastly opposed its production; but the Emperor Nicholas I. heard of it, read it, ordered it produced, and upheld Gogol in enthusiastic delight. Officials, merchants, police, literary people, everybody, attacked the author. They had laughed at his pathos; now they raged at his comedy, refused to recognize their own portraits, and still tried to have the play prohibited. Gogol's health and spirits were profoundly affected by this unexpected enmity. He fled abroad, and returned to Russia thereafter only at intervals for brief visits, and chiefly to Moscow, where most of his faithful friends lived. He traveled much, but spent most of his time in Rome, where his lavish charities kept him always poor, even after the complete success of 'The Inspector' and of the first part of 'Dead Souls' would have enabled him to exist in comfort. He was accustomed to say that he could only see Russia clearly when he was far from her, and in a measure he proved this by his inimitable first volume of 'Dead Souls.' Herein he justified Pushkin's expectations in giving him that subject which would enable him to paint, in types, the classes and localities of his fatherland. But this long residence in Rome was fatal to his mind and health, and eventually extinguished the last sparks of genius. The Russian mind is peculiarly inclined to mysticism, and Russian writers of eminence seem to be even more susceptible in that direction than ordinary men. Of the noted writers in this century, Pushkin and Lermontoff had leaned decidedly in that direction towards the end of their careers, brief as their lives were. Gogol was their intimate friend in Russia, and after he went abroad he was the intimate friend of the aged poet Zhukovsky, who became a mystic in his declining years.

Even in his school days Gogol had shown, in his letters to his mother, a marked tendency to religious exaltation. Now, under the combined pressure of his personal inclinations, friendships, and the clerical atmosphere of Rome, he developed into a mystic and ascetic of the most pronounced type. In this frame of mind, he looked upon all his earlier writings as sins which must be atoned for; and yet his immense self-esteem was so flattered by the tremendous success of 'The Inspector' and of the first part of 'Dead Souls,' that he began to regard himself as a kind of divinely commissioned prophet, whose duty it was to exhort his fellow-men. The extract from these hortatory letters to his friends which he published convinced his countrymen that nothing more was to be expected from him. The failure of this volume only helped to plunge him into deeper depths of self-torture. In the few remaining lucid moments of his genius he worked at the second part of 'Dead Souls,' but destroyed what he had written in the moments of ecstatic remorse which followed. Thus the greatest work of his mature genius remains uncompleted. In 1848 he made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and returned through Odessa to Moscow, where he lived until his death, growing constantly more mystical, more ascetic. Sleepless nights spent in prayer, fasting to the extent of trying to nourish himself (as it is affirmed that practiced ascetics successfully can) for a week on one of the tiny double loaves which are used in the Holy Communion, completed the ravages of his long-endured maladies.

It was for publishing in a Moscow paper an enthusiastic obituary of the dead genius, which he had been forbidden to publish in St. Petersburg, that Turgénieff was sent into residence on his estate, and enriched the world with the first work of the rising genius, 'The Diary of a Sportsman.' Acuteness of observation; natural, infectious, genuine humor; vivid realism; and an inimitable power of depicting national types, are Gogol's distinguishing characteristics: and these in varying degrees are precisely the ingredients which have entered into the works of his successors and rendered Russian literature famous as a school.

In reviewing Gogol's work, we may set aside with but cursory mention his youthful idyl, written while still in the gymnasium, published anonymously and overwhelmed with ridicule, 'Hans Kuchelgarten'; his 'Arabesques,' which are useful chiefly as a contribution to the study of the man and his opinions, not as permanent additions to literature; his 'Extracts from Correspondence with Friends,' which belong to the sermonizing, clouded period of his life's close; and the divers 'Fragments,' both of prose and dramatic writing, all of which are conscientiously included in the complete editions of his writings.

The only complete play which he wrote except 'The Inspector' is the comedy 'Marriage,' which is still acted, though very seldom. It is full of naturalness and his own peculiar humor, but its subject does not appeal to the universal public of all lands as nearly as does the plan of 'The Inspector.' The plot, in brief, is founded on a young girl's meditations on marriage, and her actions which lead up to and follow those meditations. The Heroine, desirous of marrying, invokes the aid of the Match-maker, the old-time matrimonial agent in the Russian merchant and peasant classes by conventional etiquette. The Match-maker offers for her consideration several suitable men, all strangers; the Heroine makes her choice, and is very well content with her suitor. But she begins to meditate on the future, becomes moved to tears by the thought of her daughter's possible unhappiness in a hypothetical wretched marriage in the dim future, and at last, unable to endure this painful prospect, she evades her betrothed and breaks off the match. While the characteristic and national touches are keen and true,—precursors of the vein which Ostrovsky so happily developed later,—the play must remain a matter of greater interest to Russians than to foreigners.

The interest of 'The Inspector,' on the other hand, is universal: official negligence and corruption, bribery, masculine boastfulness and vanity, and feminine qualities to correspond, are the private prerogatives of no one nation, of no one epoch. The comedy possesses all the elements of social portraiture and satire without caricature: concentration of time, place, action, language, and a tremendous condensation of character traits which are not only truly, typically national, but which come within the ken of all fair-minded persons in other countries.

The volume with which he scored his first success, and which must remain a classic, is 'Evenings at a Farm-House near Dikanka.' As the second volume, 'Mirgorod,' and his volume of 'St. Petersburg Tales,' all combine essentially the same ingredients, though in varying measure, we may consider them together. All the tales in the first two volumes are from his beloved birthplace, Little Russia. Some of them are simply the artistic and literary rendering of popular legends, whose counterparts may be found in the folk literature of other lands. Such are the story of the vampire, 'Vy,' 'St. John's Eve,' and the exquisite 'A May Night,' where the famous poetical spirit of the Ukraina is displayed in its full force and beauty. 'The Lost Document,' 'Sorotchinsky Fair,' 'The Enchanted Spot,' and others of like legendary but more exclusively national character, show the same fertility of wit and skill of management, with close study of every-day customs, superstitions, and life, which render them invaluable to both Russians and foreigners.

More important than these, however, are such stories as 'Old-Fashioned Gentry' (or 'Farmers'), where keen but kindly wit, more tempered than the mirth of youthful high spirits which had imbued the fantastic tales, is mingled with the purest, deepest pathos and minute delineation of character and customs, in an inimitable work of the highest art. To this category belong also 'How the Two Ivans Quarreled' (the full title, 'How Ivan Ivan'itch and Ivan Nikifor'itch Quarreled,' is rather unwieldy for the foreign ear), and 'The Cloak,' from the volume of ‘St. Petersburg Tales.’ We may also count ‘The Nevsky Prospekt’ with these; while ‘The Portrait’ is semi-fantastic, ‘The Nose’ and ‘The Calash’ are wholly so, though not legendary, and ‘The Diary of a Madman’ is unexcelled as an amusing but touching study of a diseased mind in the ranks of petty officialdom.

Gogol’s capital work, however, is his ‘Dead Souls.’ In it he carried to its highest point his talent for accurate delineation of his countrymen and the conditions of their life. There is less pathos than in some of his short tales; but all the other elements are perfected. Pushkin’s generosity and sound judgment were never better shown than in the gift which he made to Gogol of the plan of this book. He could not have executed it himself as well. The work must forever rank as a Russian classic; it ought to rank as a universal classic. The types are as fresh, true, and vivid to one who knows the Russia of to-day as they were when they were first introduced to the enthusiastic public of 1842.

In the pre-Emancipation days, a soul meant a male serf. The women were not counted in the periodical revisions, though the working unit, a *tyaglo*, consisted of a man, his wife, and his horse — the indispensable trinity to agricultural labor. In the interval between the revisions, a landed proprietor continued to pay for all the serfs accredited to him on the official list, the births being reckoned for convenience as an exact offset to the deaths. Another provision of the law was, that no one should purchase serfs without the land to which they belonged, except for the purpose of colonization. An ingenious fraud suggested by a combination of these two laws forms the foundation of ‘Dead Souls.’ The hero, Tchitchikoff, is an official who has struggled up ambitiously and shrewdly, through numerous vicissitudes of bribe-taking, extortion, and ensuing discomfiture, to a snug berth in the custom-house service, from which he is ejected under circumstances which render further flights difficult if not impossible. In this strait he hits upon the idea of purchasing from landed proprietors of mediocre probity the souls who are dead, though still nominally alive, and on whom they are forced to pay taxes. Land is being given away gratuitously, in the southern governments of Kherson and Tauris, to any one who will settle upon it, as every one knows. His plan is to buy one thousand non-existent serfs («dead souls»), at a maximum of one hundred rubles apiece, for colonization on an equally non-existent estate in the south, and then, by mortgaging them to the loan bank for the nobility known as the Council of Guardians, obtain a capital of two hundred thousand rubles. In pursuance of this clever scheme he sets out on his travels, visits provincial towns and the estates of landed gentry of every shade of character, dishonesty, and financial standing, where he either buys for a song, or cajoles from them as a gift, large numbers of «dead souls.» It is unnecessary and impossible to do more than reinforce the hint which this statement contains, by the assurance that Gogol used to the uttermost the magnificent opportunity thus afforded him of showing up Russian life and manners. Though the scene of Tchitchikoff's wanderings does not include either capital, the life there does not escape the author's notice in his asides and illustrative arguments. It may also be said that while his talent lies pre-eminently in the delineation of men, he does not fail in his portraits of women; though as a rule these are more general — in the nature of a composite photograph — than particular. The day for minute analysis of feminine character had not arrived, and in all Gogol's works there is, properly speaking, no such thing as the heroine playing a first-class rôle, whether of the antique or the modern pattern.

Gogol's great historical novel, 'Taras Bulba,' which deals with the famous Kazak republic of the Dniepr Falls (Zaporózhya), stands equally with his other volumes of the first rank in poetry, dramatic power, and truth to life. It possesses also a force of tragedy and passion in love which are altogether lacking, or but faintly indicated, in his other masterpieces.

Isabel F. Hapgood

FROM 'THE INSPECTOR'

Scene: A room in the house of the Chief of Police. Present: Chief of Police, Curator of Benevolent Institutions, Superintendent of Schools, Judge, Commissary of Police, Doctor, two Policemen.

CHIEF — I have summoned you, gentlemen, in order to communicate to you an unpleasant piece of news: an Inspector is coming.

Judge — What! An Inspector?

Chief — An Inspector from St. Petersburg, incognito. And with secret orders, to boot.

Judge — I thought so!

Curator — If there's not trouble, then I'm mistaken!

Superintendent — Heavens! And with secret orders, too!

Chief — I foresaw it: all last night I was dreaming of two huge rats. I never saw such rats: they were black, and of supernatural size! They came, and smelled, and went away. I will read you the letter I have received from Andrei Ivan'itch Tchorikoff,— whom you know, Artemiy Philip'itch. This is what he writes:—"Dear friend, gossip and benefactor!" [*Mutters in an undertone, as he runs his eye quickly over it.*] "I hasten to inform you, among other things, that an official has arrived with orders to inspect the entire government, and our district in particular." [*Raises his finger significantly.*] "I have heard this from trustworthy people, although he represents himself as a private individual. As I know that you are not quite free from faults, since you are a sensible man, and do not like to let slip what runs into your hands—" [*Pauses.*] Well, here are some remarks about his own affairs—"so I advise you to be on your guard: for he may arrive at any moment, if he is not already arrived and living somewhere incognito. Yesterday—" Well, what follows is about family matters— "My sister Anna Kirilovna has come with her husband; Ivan Kirilitch has grown very fat, and still plays the violin—" and so forth, and so forth. So there you have the whole matter.

Judge—Yes, the matter is so unusual, so remarkable; something unexpected.

Superintendent—And why? Anton Anton'itch, why is this? Why is the Inspector coming hither?

Chief [*sighs*]—Why? Evidently, it is fate. [*Sighs.*] Up to this time, God be praised, they have attended to other towns; now our turn has come.

Judge—I think, Anton Anton'itch, that there is some fine political cause at the bottom of this. This means something: Russia—yes—Russia wants to go to war, and the minister, you see, has sent an official to find out whether there is any treason.

Chief—What's got hold of him? A sensible man, truly! Treason in a provincial town! Is it a border town—is it, now? Why, you could ride away from here for three years and not reach any other kingdom.

Judge—No, I tell you. You don't—you don't— The government has subtle reasons; no matter if it is out of the way, they don't care for that.

Chief—Whether they care or not, I have warned you, gentlemen. See to it! I have made some arrangements in my own department, and I advise you to do the same. Especially you, Artemiy Philip'itch! Without doubt, this traveling official will wish first of all to inspect your institutions — and therefore you must arrange things so that they will be decent. The nightcaps should be clean, and the sick people should not look like blacksmiths, as they usually do in private.

Curator — Well, that's a mere trifle. We can put clean nightcaps on them.

Chief — And then, you ought to have written up over the head of each bed, in Latin or some other language — that's your business — the name of each disease: when each patient was taken sick, the day and hour. It is not well that your sick people should smoke such strong tobacco that one has to sneeze every time he goes in there. Yes, and it would be better if there were fewer of them: it will be set down at once to bad supervision or to lack of skill on the doctor's part.

Curator — Oh! so far as the doctoring is concerned, Christian Ivan'itch and I have already taken measures: the nearer to nature the better, — we don't use any expensive medicines. Man is a simple creature: if he dies, why then he dies; if he gets well, why then he gets well. And then, it would have been difficult for Christian Ivan'itch to make them understand him — he doesn't know one word of Russian.

Chief — I should also advise you, Ammos Feodor'itch, to turn your attention to court affairs. In the ante-room, where the clients usually assemble, your janitor has got a lot of geese and goslings, which waddle about under foot. Of course it is praiseworthy to be thrifty in domestic affairs, and why should not the janitor be so too? only, you know, it is not proper in that place. I meant to mention it to you before, but always forgot it.

Judge — I'll order them to be taken to the kitchen this very day. Will you come and dine with me?

Chief — And moreover, it is not well that all sorts of stuff should be put to dry in the court-room, and that over the very desk, with the documents, there should be a hunting-whip. I know that you are fond of hunting, but there is a proper time for everything, and you can hang it up there again when the Inspector takes his departure. And then your assistant — he's a man of experience, but there's a smell about him as though he had just come from a distillery — and that's not as it should be. I meant to speak to you about it long ago, but something, I don't recall now precisely what, put it out of my mind. There is a remedy, if he really was born with the odor, as he asserts:

you might advise him to eat onions or garlic or something. In that case, Christian Ivan'itch could assist you with some medicaments.

Judge—No, it's impossible to drive it out: he says that his mother injured him when he was a child, and an odor of whisky has emanated from him ever since.

Chief—Yes, I just remarked on it. As for internal arrangements, and what Andrei Ivan'itch in his letter calls «faults,» I can say nothing. Yes, and strange to say, there is no man who has not his faults. God himself arranged it so, and it is useless for the freethinkers to maintain the contrary.

Judge—What do you mean by faults, Anton Anton'itch? There are various sorts of faults. I tell every one frankly that I take bribes; but what sort of bribes? greyhound pups. That's quite another thing.

Chief—Well, greyhound pups or anything else, it's all the same.

Judge—Well, no, Anton Anton'itch. But for example, if some one has a fur coat worth five hundred rubles, and his wife has a shawl—

Chief—Well, and how about your taking greyhound pups as bribes? Why don't you trust in God? You never go to church. I am firm in the faith, at all events, and go to church every Sunday. But you—oh, I know you! If you begin to talk about the creation of the world, one's hair rises straight up on his head.

Judge—It came of itself, of its own accord.

Chief—Well, in some cases it is worse to have brains than to be entirely without them. Besides, I only just mentioned the district court: but to tell the truth, it is only very rarely that any one ever looks in there; 'tis such an enviable place that God himself protects it. And as for you, Luka Luk'itch, as superintendent of schools, you must bestir yourself with regard to the teachers. They are educated people, to be sure, and were reared at divers academies, but they have very peculiar ways which go naturally with that learned profession. One of them, for instance, the fat-faced one,—I don't recall his name,—cannot get along without making grimaces when he takes his seat;—like this [*makes a grimace*]: and then he begins to smooth his beard out from under his neckerchief, with his hand. In short, if he makes such faces at the scholars, there is nothing to be said: it must be necessary; I am no judge of that. But just consider—if he were to do that to a visitor it might be very unpleasant; the Inspector or any one else might take it as personal. The Devil knows what might come of it.

Superintendent — What am I to do with him? I have spoken to him about it several times already. A few days ago, when our chief went into the class-room, he made such a grimace as I never beheld before. He made it out of good-will; but it is a judgment on me, because freethinking is being inculcated in the young people.

Chief — And I must also mention the teacher of history. He's a wise man, that's plain, and has acquired a great mass of learning; but he expresses himself with so much warmth that he loses control of himself. I heard him once: well, so long as he was talking about the Assyrians and Babylonians, it was all right; but when he got to Alexander of Macedon, I can't describe to you what came over him. I thought there was a fire, by heavens! He jumped from his seat and dashed his chair to the floor with all his might. Alexander of Macedon was a hero, no doubt; but why smash the chairs? There will be a deficit in the accounts, just as the result of that.

Superintendent — Yes, he is hasty! I have remarked on it to him several times. He says, «What would you have? I would sacrifice my life for science.»

Chief — Yes, such is the incomprehensible decree of fate: a learned man is always a drunkard, or else he makes faces that would scare the very saints.

Superintendent — God forbid that he should inspect the educational institutions. Everybody meddles and tries to show everybody else that he is a learned man.

Chief — That would be nothing: that cursed incognito! All of a sudden you hear — «Ah, here you are, my little dears! And who,» says he, «is the Judge here?» — «Lyapkin-Tyapkin.» — «And who is the Superintendent of the Hospital?» — «Zemlyanika!» That's the worst of it!

Enter Postmaster

Chief — Well, how do you feel, Ivan Kusmitch?

Postmaster — How do I feel? How do *you* feel, Anton Anton'itch?

Chief — How do I feel? I'm not afraid; and yet I am, — a little. The merchants and citizens cause me some anxiety. They say I have been hard with them; but God knows, if I have ever taken anything from them it was not out of malice. I even think [*takes him by the arm and leads him aside*] — I even think there may be a sort of complaint against me. Why, in fact, is the Inspector coming to us? Listen, Ivan Kusmitch: why can't you — for our common good, you know — open every letter which passes through your office, going or coming, and read it, to see whether it contains a complaint or is simply correspondence? If it does not, then you can seal it up again. Besides, you could even deliver the letter unsealed.

Postmaster — I know, I know. You can't tell me anything about that; I always do it, not out of circumspection but out of curiosity: I'm deadly fond of knowing what is going on in the world. It's very interesting reading, I can tell you! It is a real treat to read some letters: they contain such descriptions of occurrences, and they're so improving — better than the Moscow News.

[The play proceeds: two men, the town busybodies, happen to find at the inn a traveler who has been living on credit and going nowhere for two weeks. The landlord is about to put his lodger in prison for debt, when these men jump to the conclusion that he is the Inspector. The Prefect and other terrified officials accept the suggestion, in spite of his plain statement as to his identity. They set about making the town presentable, entertain and bribe him, and bow down to him. He accepts their hospitality, asks loans, makes love to the Prefect's silly wife and daughter, betroths himself to the latter, receives the petitions and bribes of the oppressed townspeople,— and drives off with the best post-horses the town can furnish, ostensibly to ask the blessing of his rich old uncle on his marriage. The Postmaster intercepts a letter which he has written to a friend. Its revelations, and the ridicule which he therein casts on his hosts, open their eyes at last. At that moment a gendarme appears and announces that the Inspector has arrived. Tableau.]

Translated for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature,› by Isabel F. Hapgood

OLD-FASHIONED GENTRY

From ‹Mirgorod›

I AM very fond of the modest life of those isolated owners of remote estates which are generally called "old-fashioned" in Little Russia, and which, like ruinous and picturesque houses, are beautiful through their simplicity and complete contrast to a new and regular building whose walls have never yet been washed by the rain, whose roof has not yet been overgrown with moss, and whose porch, still possessed of its stucco, does not yet display its red bricks. I can still see the low-roofed little house, with its veranda of slender, blackened wooden columns, surrounding it on all sides, so that in case of a thunder-storm or a hail-storm you could close the window shutters without getting wet; behind it fragrant wild-cherry trees, row upon row of dwarf fruit-trees, overtopped by crimson cherries and a purple sea of plums, covered with a lead-colored bloom, luxuriant maples under whose shade rugs were spread for repose; in front of the house the spacious yard, with short fresh grass, through which paths had been worn from the storehouses to the kitchen, from the kitchen to the apartments of the family; a long-necked goose drinking water with her young goslings, soft as down; the picket fence festooned with bunches of dried apples and pears, and rugs hung out to air; a cart-load of melons standing near the store-house, the oxen unyoked and lying lazily beside it. All this has for me an indescribable charm,— perhaps because I no longer see it, and because anything from which we are separated pleases us.

But more than all else, the owners of this distant nook,— an old man and old woman,— hastening eagerly out to meet me, gave me pleasure. Afanasy Ivanovitch Tovstogub and his wife, Pulkheria Ivanovna Tovstogubikha, according to the neighboring peasants' way of expressing it, were the old people of whom I began to speak. If I were a painter and wished to depict Philemon and Baucis on canvas, I could have found no better models than they. Afanasy Ivanovitch was sixty years old, Pulkheria Ivanovna was fifty-five. Afanasy Ivanovitch was tall, always wore a short sheepskin coat covered with camlet, sat all doubled up, and was almost always smiling, whether he were telling a story or only listening to one. Pulkheria Ivanovna was rather serious, and hardly ever laughed; but her face and eyes expressed so much goodness, so much eagerness to treat you to all the best they owned, that you would probably have found a smile too repelling on her kind face. The delicate wrinkles were so agreeably disposed on their countenances that an artist would certainly have appropriated them. It seemed as though in them you might read their whole life: the pure, peaceful life led by the old, patriotic, simple-hearted, and at the same time wealthy families, which always present a marked contrast to those baser Little-Russians who work up from tar-burners and peddlers, throng the court-rooms like grasshoppers, squeeze the last copper from their fellow-countrymen, crowd Petersburg with scandal-mongers, finally acquire capital, and triumphantly add an *f* to their surnames which end in *o*. No, they did not resemble those despicable and miserable creatures, but all ancient and native Little-Russian families.

They never had any children, so all their affection was concentrated on themselves.

The rooms of the little house in which our old couple dwelt were small, low-ceiled, such as are generally to be seen with old-fashioned people. In each room stood a huge stove, which occupied nearly one-third of the space. These little rooms were frightfully hot, because both Afanasy Ivanovitch and Pulkheria Ivanovna were fond of heat. All their fuel was stored in the ante-room, which was always filled nearly to the ceiling with straw, which is generally used in Little Russia in place of wood.

The chairs of the room were of wood, and massive, in the style which generally marked those of the olden times: all had high, turned backs of natural wood, without any paint or varnish; they were not even upholstered, and somewhat resembled those which are still used by bishops. Triangular tables stood in the corners, a square table stood in front of the sofa; and there was a large mirror in a slender gilt frame, carved in foliage, which the flies had covered with black spots; in front of the sofa was a mat with flowers which resembled birds, and birds which resembled flowers: and these things constituted almost the entire furniture of the far from elegant little house where my old people lived. The maids' room was filled with young and elderly serving-women in striped chemises, to whom Pulkheria Ivanovna sometimes gave trifles to sew, and whom she set to picking over berries, but who ran about the kitchen or slept the greater part of the time. Pulkheria Ivanovna regarded it as a necessity that she should keep them in the house, and she kept a strict watch of their morals; but to no purpose.

Afanasy Ivan'itch very rarely occupied himself with the farming; although he sometimes went out to see the mowers and reapers, and gazed with great intensity at their work. All the burden of management devolved upon Pulkheria Ivan'na. Pulkheria Ivanovna's housekeeping consisted of a constant locking and unlocking of the storehouse, of salting, drying, and preserving incalculable quantities of fruits and vegetables. Her house was exactly like a chemical laboratory. A fire was constantly laid under an apple-tree; and the kettle or the brass pan with preserves, jelly, marmalade,— made with honey, with sugar, and with I know not what else,— was hardly ever taken from the tripod. Under another tree the coachman was forever distilling vodka with peach-leaves, with wild cherry, cherry flowers, wild gentian, or cherry-stones, in a copper still; and at the end of the process he was never able to control his tongue, but chattered all sorts of nonsense which Pulkheria Ivanovna did not understand, and took himself off to the kitchen to sleep. Such a quantity of all this stuff was preserved, salted, and dried that it would probably have overwhelmed the whole yard at least (for Pulkheria Ivanovna liked to lay in a store far beyond what was calculated for consumption), if the greater part of it had not been devoured by the maid-servants, who crept into the storehouse and overate themselves to such a fearful extent that they groaned and complained of their stomachs for a whole day afterwards.

Both the old folks, in accordance with old-fashioned customs, were very fond of eating. As soon as daylight dawned (they always rose early) and the doors had begun their many-toned concert of squeaks, they sat down at the table and drank coffee. When Afanasy Ivanovitch had drunk his coffee, he went out, flirted his handkerchief, and said, « Kish, kish! go away from the veranda, geese! » In the yard he generally encountered the steward: he usually entered into conversation with him, inquired about the work of the estate with the greatest minuteness, and imparted to him such a multitude of observations and orders as would have caused any one to marvel at his understanding of business; and no novice would have ventured to conjecture that so acute a master could be robbed. But his steward was a clever rascal: he knew well what answers he must give, and better still how to manage things.

This done, Afanasy Ivanovitch returned to the house, and approaching Pulkheria Ivanovna, said, « Well, Pulkheria Ivan'na, is it time to eat something, do you think? »

« What shall we have to eat now, Afanasy Ivan'itch,— some wheat and suet cakes, or some patties with poppy-seeds, or some salted mushrooms? »

« Some mushrooms, then, or some patties, if you please, » said Afanasy Ivan'itch; and then suddenly a table-cloth would make its appearance on the table, with the patties and mushrooms.

An hour before dinner Afanasy Ivan'itch took another snack, and drank vodka from an ancient silver cup, ate mushrooms, divers dried fishes, and other things. They sat down to dine at twelve o'clock. There stood upon the table, in addition to the platters and sauce-boats, a multitude of pots with covers pasted on, that the appetizing products of the savory old-fashioned cooking might not be exhaled abroad. At dinner the conversation turned upon subjects closely connected with the meal.

After dinner Afanasy Ivanovitch went to lie down for an hour, at the end of which time Pulkheria Ivanovna brought him a sliced watermelon and said, « Here, try this, Afanasy Ivan'itch; see what a good melon it is.»

« Don't put faith in it because it is red in the centre, Pulkheria Ivan'na,» said Afanasy Ivanovitch, taking a good-sized chunk. « Sometimes they are not good though they are red.»

But the watermelon slowly disappeared. Then Afanasy Ivanovitch ate a few pears, and went out into the garden for a walk with Pulkheria Ivanovna. When they returned to the house, Pulkheria Ivanovna went about her own affairs; but he sat down on the veranda facing the yard, and observed how the interior of the store-room was alternately disclosed and revealed, and how the girls jostled each other as they carried in or brought out all sorts of stuff in wooden boxes, sieves, trays, and other receptacles for fruit. After waiting a while, he sent for Pulkheria Ivanovna or went in search of her himself, and said, « What is there for me to eat, Pulkheria Ivan'na?»

« What is there?» asked Pulkheria Ivanovna. « Shall I go and tell them to bring you some curd dumplings with berries, which I had set aside for you?»

« That would be good,» answered Afanasy Ivanovitch.

« Or perhaps you could eat some kisel?» [A jelly-like pudding, made of potato flour, and flavored with some sour fruit juice.]

« That is good also,» replied Afanasy Invanovitch; whereupon all of them were immediately brought and eaten in due course.

Before supper Afanasy Invanovitch took another appetizing snack.

At half-past nine they sat down to supper. After supper they went directly to bed, and universal silence settled down upon this busy yet quiet nook.

The chamber in which Afanasy Ivanovitch and Pulkheria Ivanovna slept was so hot that very few people could have stayed in it more than a few hours; but Afanasy Ivanovitch, for the sake of more warmth, slept upon the stove bench, although the excessive heat caused him to rise several times in the course of the night and walk about the room. Sometimes Afanasy Ivanovitch groaned as he walked thus about the room.

Then Pulkheria Ivanovna inquired, "Why do you groan, Afanasy Ivan'itch?"

"God knows, Pulkheria Ivan'na! It seems to me that my stomach aches a little," said Afanasy Ivanovitch.

"Hadn't you better eat something, Afanasy Ivan'itch?"

"I don't know; perhaps it would be well, Pulkheria Ivan'na: by the way, what is there to eat?"

"Sour milk, or some stewed dried pears."

"If you please, I will try them," said Afanasy Ivanovitch. A sleepy maid was sent to ransack the cupboards, and Afanasy Ivanovitch ate a plateful; after which he remarked, "Now I seem to feel relieved."

I loved to visit them; and though I over-ate myself horribly, like all their guests, and although it was very bad for me, still I was always glad to go to them. Besides, I think that the air of Little Russia must possess some special properties which aid digestion; for if any one were to undertake to eat in that way here, there is not a doubt but that he would find himself lying on the table a corpse, instead of in bed.

Pulkheria Ivanovna had a little gray cat, which almost always lay coiled up in a ball at her feet. Pulkheria Ivanovna stroked her occasionally, and tickled her neck with her finger, the petted cat stretching it out as long as possible. It would not be correct to affirm that Pulkheria Ivanovna loved her so very much, but she had simply become attached to her from seeing her continually about. Afanasy Ivanovitch often joked about the attachment.

Behind their garden lay a large forest, which had been spared by the enterprising steward, possibly because the sound of the axe might have reached the ears of Pulkheria Ivanovna. It was dense, neglected; the old tree trunks were concealed by luxuriant hazel-bushes, and resembled the feathered legs of pigeons. In this wood dwelt wild cats. These cats had a long conference with Pulkheria Ivanovna's tame cat through a hole under the storehouse, and at last led her astray, as a detachment of soldiers leads astray a dull-witted peasant. Pulkheria Ivanovna noticed that her cat was missing, and caused search to be made for her; but no cat was to be found. Three days passed; Pulkheria Ivanovna felt sorry, but in the end forgot all about her loss.

[The cat returns to the place half starved, and is coaxed to come into the house and eat, but runs away on Pulkheria Ivanovna's trying to pet her.]

The old woman became pensive. « It is my death which is come for me," she said to herself; and nothing could cheer her. All day she was sad. In vain did Afanasy Ivanovitch jest, and seek to discover why she had suddenly grown so grave. Pulkheria Ivanovna either made no reply, or one which did not in the least satisfy Afanasy Ivanovitch. The next day she had grown visibly thinner.

« What is the matter with you, Pulkheria Ivanovna? You are not ill?"

« No, I am not ill, Afanasy Ivan'itch. I want to tell you about a strange occurrence. I know that I shall die this year; my death has already come for me."

Afanasy Ivanovitch's mouth was distorted with pain. Nevertheless he tried to conquer the sad feeling in his mind, and said smiling, « God only knows what you are talking about, Pulkheria Ivan'na! You must have drunk some of your peach infusion instead of your usual herb tea."

« No, Afanasy Ivan'itch, I have not drunk my peach infusion," replied Pulkheria Ivanovna. « I beg of you, Afanasy Ivan'itch, to fulfill my wishes. When I die, bury me by the church wall. Put on me my grayish gown,—the one with the small flowers on a cinnamon ground. My satin gown with the red stripes you must not put on me: a corpse needs no clothes; of what use are they to her? But it will be good for you. Make yourself a fine dressing-gown, in case visitors come, so that you can make a good appearance when you receive them."

« God knows what you are saying, Pulkheria Ivan'na!" said Afanasy Ivanovitch. « Death will come some time; but you frighten me with such remarks."

« Mind, Yavdokha," she said, turning to the housekeeper, whom she had sent for expressly, « that you look after your master when I am dead, and cherish him like the apple of your eye, like your own child. See that everything he likes is prepared in the kitchen; that his linen and clothes are always clean; that when visitors happen in, you dress him properly, otherwise he will come forth in his old dressing-gown, for he often forgets now whether it is a festival or an ordinary day."

Poor old woman! She had no thought for the great moment which was awaiting her, nor of her soul, nor of the future life;

she thought only of her poor companion, with whom she had passed her life, and whom she was about to leave an orphan and unprotected. After this fashion did she arrange everything with great skill, so that after her death Afanasy Ivanovitch might not perceive her absence. Her faith in her approaching end was so firm, and her mind was so fixed upon it, that in a few days she actually took to her bed, and was unable to swallow any nourishment.

Afanasy Ivanovitch was all attention, and never left her bedside. « Perhaps you could eat something, Pulkheria Ivan'na,» he said, gazing uneasily into her eyes. But Pulkheria Ivanovna made no reply. At length, after a long silence, she moved her lips as though desirous of saying something — and her spirit fled.

Afanasy Ivanovitch was utterly amazed. It seemed to him so terrible that he did not even weep. He gazed at her with troubled eyes, as though he did not understand the meaning of a corpse.

Five years passed. Being in the vicinity at the end of the five years, I went to the little estate of Afanasy Ivanovitch, to inquire after my old neighbor, with whom I had spent the day so agreeably in former times, dining always on the choicest delicacies of his kind-hearted wife. When I drove up to the door, the house seemed twice as old as formerly; the peasants' cottages were lying on one side, without doubt exactly like their owners; the fence and hedge around the yard were dilapidated; and I myself saw the cook pull out a paling to heat the stove, when she had only a couple of steps to take in order to get the kindling-wood which had been piled there expressly for her use. I stepped sadly upon the veranda; the same dogs, now blind or with broken legs, raised their bushy tails, all matted with burs, and barked.

The old man came out to meet me. So this was he! I recognized him at once, but he was twice as bent as formerly. He knew me, and greeted me with the smile which was so familiar to me. I followed him into the room. All there seemed as in the past; but I observed a strange disorder, a tangible loss of something. In everything was visible the absence of the painstaking Pulkheria Ivanovna. At table, they gave us a knife with out a handle; the dishes were prepared with little art. I did not care to inquire about the management of the estate; I was even afraid to glance at the farm buildings. I tried to interest Afanasy

Ivanovitch in something, and told him divers bits of news. He listened with his customary smile, but his glance was at times quite unintelligent; and thoughts did not wander therein — they simply disappeared.

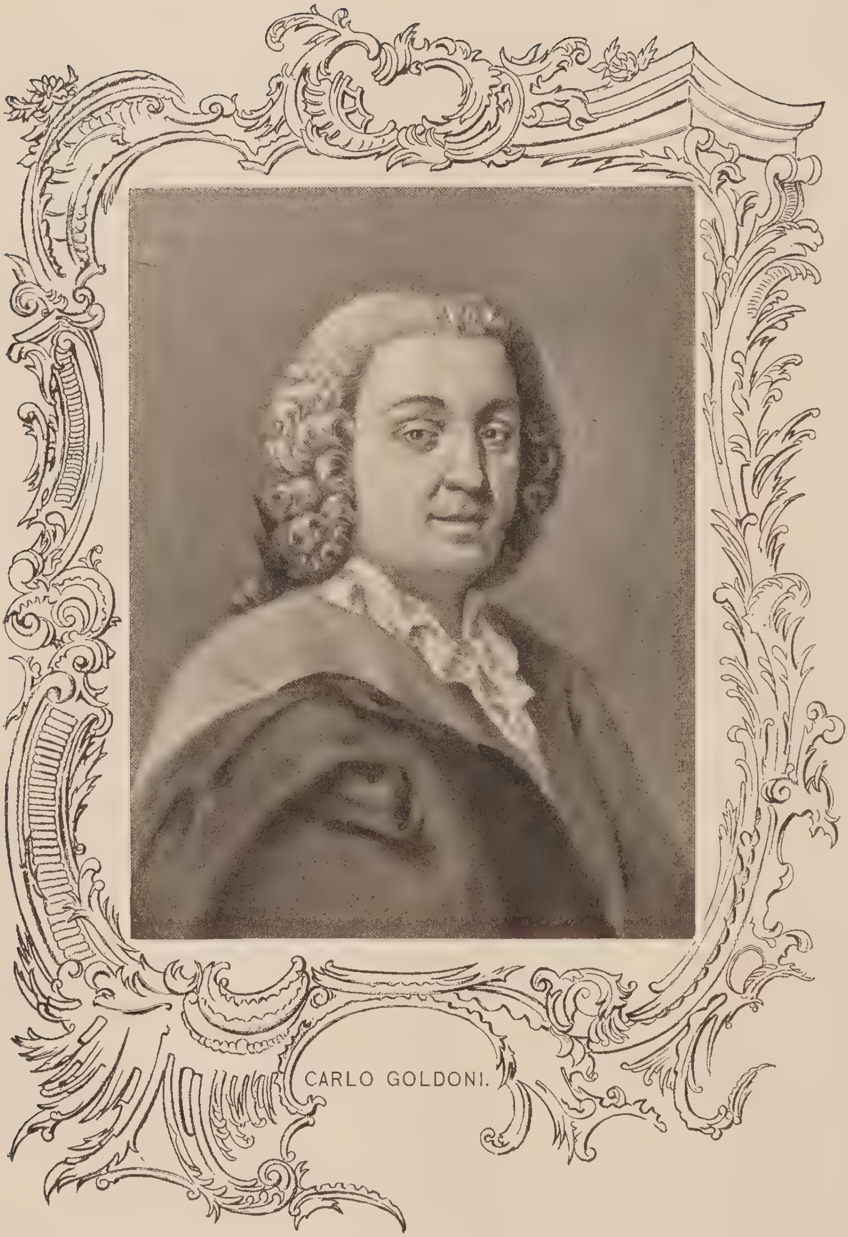
« This is the dish —» said Afanasy Ivanovitch when they brought us curds and flour with cream, « — this is the dish — » he continued, and I observed that his voice began to quiver, and that tears were on the point of bursting from his leaden eyes; but he collected all his strength in the effort to repress them: « this is the dish which the — the — the de—ceas— » and his tears suddenly gushed forth, his hand fell upon his plate, the plate was overturned, flew from the table, and was broken. He sat stupidly, holding the spoon, and tears like a never-ceasing fountain flowed, flowed in streams down upon his napkin.

He did not live long after this. I heard of his death recently. What was strange, though, was that the circumstances attending it somewhat resembled those connected with the death of Pulkheria Ivanovna. One day, Afanasy Ivanovitch decided to take a short stroll in the garden. As he went slowly down the path with his usual heedlessness, a strange thing happened to him. All at once he heard some one behind him say in a distinct voice, « Afanasy Ivan'itch! » He turned round, but there was no one there. He looked on all sides; he peered into the shrubbery, — no one anywhere. The day was calm and the sun was shining brightly. He pondered for a moment. Then his face lighted up, and at last he cried, « It is Pulkheria Ivanovna calling me! »

He surrendered himself utterly to the moral conviction that Pulkheria Ivanovna was calling him. He yielded with the meekness of a submissive child, withered up, coughed, melted away like a candle, and at last expired like it when nothing remains to feed its poor flame. « Lay me beside Pulkheria Ivan'na »— that was all he said before his death.

His wish was fulfilled; and they buried him beside the churchyard wall close to Pulkheria Ivanovna's grave. The guests at the funeral were few, but there was a throng of common and poor people. The house was already quite deserted. The enterprising clerk and village elder carried off to their cottages all the old household utensils which the housekeeper did not manage to appropriate.

Translated for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature,› by Isabel F. Hapgood



CARLO GOLDONI.

CARLO GOLDONI

(1707–1793)

BY WILLIAM CRANSTON LAWTON

Italy is generally felt to be, above all other lands, the natural home of the drama. In acting, as in music, indeed, the sceptre has never wholly passed from her: Ristori and Salvini certainly are not yet forgotten. The Græco-Roman comedies of Plautus and Terence, the rhetorical tragedy of Seneca, have had a far more direct hand in molding the modern dramatists' art than have the loftier creative masterpieces of the great Attic Four. Indeed, Latin has never become in Italy a really dead language, remote from the popular consciousness. The splendor of the Church ritual, the great mass of the educated clergy, the almost purely Latin roots of the vernacular, have made such a loss impossible.

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries Terence and Plautus were often revived on the stage, still oftener imitated in Latin. Many of the greatest names in modern Italian literature are in some degree associated with drama. Thus Machiavelli made free Italian versions from both the comic Latin poets, and wrote a powerful though immoral prose comedy, ‹The Magic Draught› (Mandragola). Tasso's ‹Aminta› is as sweet and musical, and hardly so artificial, as that famous ‹Pastor Fido› of Guarini, which has become the ideal type of all the mock-pastoral comedy out of which the modern opera has risen.

So, when Goldoni is hailed as the father of modern Italian comedy, it can only mean that his prolific Muse has dominated the stage in our own century and in its native land. In his delightfully naïve Memoirs he frequently announces himself as the leader of *reform* in the dramatic art. And this claim is better founded; though there is a startling discrepancy between the character, the temper, the life of this child of the sun, and the Anglo-Saxon ideal of «Man the Reformer» as delineated, for instance, by our own cooler-blooded Emerson!

Under the lead of Goldoni's elder contemporary Metastasio, the lyrical drama of pastoral and artificial love had become fully wedded to music; and it is rightly felt that the resulting modern opera is a genus of its own, not essentially nor chiefly dramatic in character and aims. An opera can be sung without action; it cannot be acted without music. On the other hand, the farce had become almost restricted to the stock masked characters, Pantaloon, the Dottore, Arlecchino, and the rest, with a narrow range of childish buffoonery in the action. The companies of professional actors, endowed with that marvelous power of improvisation which the very language of Italy seems to stimulate, hardly permitted the poet to offer them more than a mere outline of a shallow plot, to be filled in from scene to scene at the impulse of the moment on the stage!

Under these circumstances it was indeed necessary to reclaim the rights of the dramatic poet, to reduce to decent limits the «gag» which the comic actor has doubtless always been eager to use, and also to educate or beguile his public up to the point of lending a moderately attentive ear to a play of sustained interest and culminating plot. In this seemingly modest but really most difficult task, Goldoni scored a decided success,— a triumph.

Even his checkered life as a whole was, at eighty, in his own retrospect a happy comedy, mingled with few serious reverses and hardly darkened at all by remorse. Such lives at best are nowise numerous. Adequate self-portraitures of successful artists are so rare that the autobiographies of the gentle Goldoni, and of his savage fellow-countryman Benvenuto Cellini, almost form a class of literature by themselves.

Born in Venice in fair social position, Goldoni spent his childhood chiefly in Chiozza, a ruder and humbler miniature of the island city some twenty-five miles away. Though an incurable wanderer,—indeed, so filled with the true Bohemian's feverish love for change that he never could endure even success anywhere for many summers,— he yet gave more of his best years, and a heartier loyalty, to Venice than to any other home. He knew best, and delineated best, the ordinary life of the lagoons. Mr. Howells, himself by long residence and love a half-Venetian, declares that the comedies in the local dialect are invariably the best, and next best the Italian plays whose scenes are at least laid in Venice. Perhaps the critic is here himself unduly swayed by his affections. Goldoni knew well nearly all Italian lands. He had even, for a series of years, a career as an advocate in Pisa. «My comic genius was not extinguished, but suppressed,» he explains. He did not even then give up play-writing, and a traveling theatre manager easily beguiled him back to Venice. This was in 1747, and this same manager, Medebac, setting up a new theatre in Venice, absorbed Goldoni's energies for several years. It was in 1750 that he successfully carried out a rash vow to produce sixteen new comedies in a single year! Among these are a goodly number of his best, including 'The Coffee-House,' from which a few scenes are given below.

Though he passed over into the service of a different theatre, traveled constantly with his actors, accepted invitations to Parma, Rome, etc., to oversee the performance of his plays, yet he never gave up his home in Venice altogether, until summoned to Paris in 1761. These fourteen years, moreover, form the happiest period of his life. His income from the theatres, from published editions of his comedies, and from his inherited property, would have made him wealthy, but for his extravagant and careless mode of life.

Despite one notable success in French with the comedy ‘The Surly Benefactor’ (1771), Goldoni's life in France was relatively unprofitable and ignoble. He became Italian teacher of various royal princesses, with the utmost uncertainty and delay as to his salaries or pensions. Yet he could never break the fascination of Paris. The art of the French actors was a never-failing delight to him. There, at the age of eighty, in French, he wrote and published his ‘Memoirs.’ The Revolution swept away his negligent patrons. In poverty and utter neglect he died at last, just as the republicans were ready to restore his royal pension.

Goldoni was the child of Italy and of the eighteenth century. He had no serious quarrel with his environment. He was not greatly superior, in actual character or aspirations, to his associates. His affection for his devoted wife did not save him from many a wandering passion. The promising prima donnas, in particular, found in him an all too devoted instructor and protector. The gaming-table and the lottery are apparently irresistible to any true Italian, and Goldoni knew by heart the passions which he ridicules or condemns, though without bitterness, upon his stage. His oft-repeated claim to have reformed the Italian theatre meant chiefly this: that between the lyrical drama of Metastasio on the one hand, and the popular masque with stock characters on the other,—and while contributing to both these forms of art,—he did firmly establish the comedy of plot and dialogue, carefully learned and rehearsed, in which the players must speak the speech as it is pronounced to them by the poet.

Goldoni himself acknowledges, perhaps not too sincerely, in his Parisian memoirs, the superiority, the mastership, of Molière. In truth, the great Frenchman stands, with Aristophanes and Shakespeare, upon a lonely height quite unapproached by lesser devotees of Thalia. We must not seek in Goldoni a prober of the human heart, not even a fearless satirist of social conditions. In his rollicking good-humor and content with the world as he finds it, Goldoni is much like Plautus. He is moreover under a censorship hardly less severe. He dares not, for instance, introduce upon his stage any really offensive type of Venetian nobleman. As for religious dictation, the convent must not even be mentioned, though the *aunt* with whom the young lady is visiting sometimes becomes as transparent an idiom as the «uncle» of a spendthrift cockney! The audience, moreover, demand only diversion, not serious instruction (as Goethe complains, even of his grave Germans, in the 'Prolog im Theater'). It is remarkable, under all these conditions, how healthy, how kindly, how proper, most of Goldoni's work is. Doubtless, like Goldsmith, he could preach the more gracefully, persuasively, and unobservedly, because he never attempted to escape from the very vices or indulgences that he satirizes. But even the most determined seeker for the moral element in art will find little indeed thereof in Goldoni's merry comedies. Incredible as it seems to us Puritans, he really made it his mission to amuse. Thoroughly in love with the rather ignoble, trivial life of his day, he holds the dramatic mirror up to it with lifelong optimism and enjoyment. His wit is not keen, his poetic imagination is slight indeed. Aside from the true dramatist's skill in construction, in plot, his power lies chiefly in the rapid, clear, firm outlines of his character-drawing. These characters are for the most part just about such men and women, such creatures of impulse and whim, such genial mingling of naughtiness and good intentions, as we see about us. He never delineates a saint or a hero; hardly a monster of wickedness. He had never known either, and would not have been interested if he had. The charm of Goldoni is felt chiefly in Venice, or at least in Italy, while listening to his comedy and watching the enjoyment mirrored in the faces of his own audience. It evaporates in translation, and his plays are meant only to be heard, not read. To Mr. Howells's own affectionate testimony we may add his happy citation from Goethe, who is writing from Venice in 1786:

> «Yesterday, at the theatre of St. Luke, was performed 'Le Baruffe-Chiozotte,' which I should interpret 'The Frays and Feuds of Chiozza.' The *dramatis personæ* are principally seafaring people, inhabitants of Chiozza, with their wives, sisters, and daughters. The usual noisy demonstrations of such sort of people in their good or ill luck,—their dealings one with another, their vehemence but goodness of heart, commonplace remarks and unaffected manners, their naïve wit and humor,—all this was excellently imitated. The piece moreover is Goldoni's, and as I had been only the day before in the place itself, and as the tones and manners of the sailors and people of the seaport still echoed in my ears and floated before my eyes, it delighted me very much; and although I did not understand a single allusion, I was nevertheless, on the whole, able to follow it pretty well. . . . I never witnessed anything like the noisy delight the people evinced at seeing themselves and their mates represented with such truth of nature. It was one continued laugh and tumultuous shout of exultation from beginning to end. . . . Great praise is due to the author, who out of nothing has here created the most amusing *divertissement*. However, he never could have done it with any other people than his own merry and light-hearted countrymen.»

Of Goldoni's one hundred and sixty comedies, only a scanty handful have been tolerably translated in English. As accessible and agreeable an introduction as any, perhaps, is the version of four notable plays by Miss Helen Zimmern in the series ‹Masterpieces of Foreign Authors.› The ‹Memoirs› have been fairly rendered by John Black, and this version, considerably abridged, was served up by Mr. Howells in 1877 among his series of ‹Choice Autobiographies.› Mr. Howells's introductory essay appeared also in the Atlantic Monthly. It has been drawn upon somewhat in the present sketch.

William Cranston Lawton.

FIRST LOVE AND PARTING

From the ‹Memoirs of Carlo Goldoni›

I WAS intrusted some time afterwards with another commission, of a much more agreeable and amusing nature. This was to carry through an investigation, ten leagues from the town, into the circumstances of a dispute where firearms had been made use of and dangerous wounds received. As the country where this happened was flat, and the road lay through charming estates and country-houses, I engaged several of my friends to follow me; we were in all twelve, six males and six females, and four domestics. We all rode on horseback, and we employed twelve days in this delicious expedition. . . .

In this party there were two sisters, one married and the other single. The latter was very much to my liking, and I may say I made the party for her alone. She was as prudent and modest as her sister was headstrong and foolish; the singularity of our journey afforded us an opportunity of coming to an explanation, and we became lovers.

My investigation was concluded in two hours; we selected another road for our return, to vary our pleasure. . . . The six gentlemen of our party proposed another species of entertainment. In the palace of the governor there was a theatre, which they wished to put to some use; and they did me the honor to tell me that they had conceived the project on my account, and they left me the power of choosing the pieces and distributing the characters. I thanked them, and accepted the proposition; and with the approbation of his Excellency and my chancellor, I put myself at the head of this new entertainment. I could have wished something comic, but I was not fond of buffoonery, and there were no good comedies; I therefore gave the preference to tragedy. As the operas of Metastasio were then represented everywhere, even without music, I put the airs into recitative; I endeavored as well as I could to approximate the style of that charming author; and I made choice of 'Didone' and 'Siroe' for our representation. I distributed the parts according to the characters of my actors, whom I knew, and I reserved the worst for myself. In this I acted wisely, for I was completely unsuited for tragedy. Fortunately, I had composed two small pieces in which I played two parts of character, and redeemed my reputation. The first of these pieces was 'The Good Father,' and the second 'La Cantatrice.' Both were approved of, and my acting was considered passable for an amateur. I saw the last of these pieces some time afterwards at Venice, where a young advocate thought proper to give it out as his own work, and to receive compliments on the subject; but having been imprudent enough to publish it with his name, he experienced the mortification of seeing his plagiarism unmasked.

I did what I could to engage my beautiful Angelica to accept a part in our tragedies, but it was impossible; she was timid, and had she even been willing, her parents would not have given their permission. She visited us; but this pleasure cost her tears, for she was jealous, and suffered much from seeing me on such a familiar footing with my fair companions. The poor little girl loved me with tenderness and sincerity, and I loved her also with my whole soul; I may say she was the first person whom I ever loved. She aspired to become my wife, which she would have been if certain singular reflections, that however were well founded, had not turned me from the design. Her elder sister had been remarkably beautiful, and after her first child she became ugly. The youngest had the same skin and the same features; she was one of those delicate beauties whom the air injures, and whom the smallest fatigue or pain discomposes: of all of which I saw a convincing proof. The fatigue of our journey produced a visible change upon her: I was young, and if my wife were in a short time to have lost her bloom, I foresaw what would have been my despair. This was reasoning curiously for a lover; but whether from virtue, weakness, or inconstancy, I quitted Feltre without marrying her.

THE ORIGIN OF «MASKS» IN THE ITALIAN COMEDY

From the ‹Memoirs of Carlo Goldoni›

The amateurs of the old comedy, on seeing the rapid progress of the new, declared everywhere that it was unworthy of an Italian to give a blow to a species of comedy in which Italy had attained great distinction, and which no other nation had ever yet been able to imitate. But what made the greatest impression on the discontented was the suppression of masks, which my system appeared to threaten. It was said that these personages had for two centuries been the amusement of Italy, and that it ought not to be deprived of a species of comic diversion which it had created and so well supported.

Before venturing to give any opinion on this subject, I imagine the reader will have no objection to listen for a few minutes to a short account of the origin, employment, and effects of these four masks. Comedy, which in all ages has been the favorite entertainment of polished nations, shared the fate of the arts and sciences, and was buried under the ruins of the Empire during the decay of letters. The germ of comedy, however, was never altogether extinguished in the fertile bosom of Italy. Those who first endeavored to bring about its revival, not finding in an ignorant age writers of sufficient skill, had the boldness to draw out plans, to distribute them into acts and scenes, and to utter extempore the subjects, thoughts, and witticisms which they had concerted among themselves. Those who could read (and neither the great nor the rich were of the number) found that in the comedies of Plautus and Terence there were always duped fathers, debauched sons, enamored girls, knavish servants, and mercenary maids; and, running over the different districts of Italy, they took the fathers from Venice and Bologna, the servants from Bergamo, and the lovers and waiting-maids from the dominions of Rome and Tuscany. Written proofs are not to be expected of what took place in a time when writing was not in use; but I prove my assertion in this way: Pantaloon has always been a Venetian, the Doctor a Bolognese, and Brighella and Harlequin Bergamasks; and from these places, therefore, the comic personages called the four masks of the Italian comedy were taken by the players. What I say on this subject is not altogether the creature of my imagination; I possess a manuscript of the fifteenth century, in very good preservation and bound in parchment, containing a hundred and twenty subjects or sketches of Italian pieces, called comedies of art, and of which the basis of the comic humor is always Pantaloon, a Venetian merchant; the Doctor, a Bolognese jurisconsult; and Brighella and Harlequin, Bergamask valets,— the first clever and sprightly, and the other a mere dolt. Their antiquity and their long existence indicate their origin.

With respect to their employment, Pantaloon and the Doctor, called by the Italians the two old men, represent the part of fathers, and the other parts where cloaks are worn. The first is a merchant, because Venice in its ancient times was the richest and most extensively commercial country of Italy. He has always preserved the ancient Venetian costume; the black dress and the woolen bonnet are still worn in Venice; and the red under-waistcoat and breeches, cut out like drawers, with red stockings and slippers, are a most exact representation of the equipment of the first inhabitants of the Adriatic marshes. The beard, which was considered as an ornament in those remote ages, has been caricatured and rendered ridiculous in subsequent periods.

The second old man, called the Doctor, was taken from among the lawyers, for the sake of opposing a learned man to a merchant; and Bologna was selected because in that city there existed a university, which, notwithstanding the ignorance of the times, still preserved the offices and emoluments of the professors. In the dress of the Doctor we observe the ancient costume of the university and bar of Bologna, which is nearly the same at this day; and the idea of the singular mask which covers his face and nose was taken from a wine stain which disfigured the countenance of a jurisconsult in those times. This is a tradition still existing among the amateurs of the comedy of art.

Brighella and Harlequin, called in Italy the two Zani, were taken from Bergamo; because, the former being a very sharp fellow and the other a stupid clown, these two extremes are only to be found among the lower orders of that part of the country. Brighella represents an intriguing, deceitful, and knavish valet. His dress is a species of livery; his swarthy mask is a caricature of the color of the inhabitants of those high mountains, tanned by the heat of the sun. Some comedians, in this character, have taken the name of Fenocchio, Fiqueto, and Scapin; but they have always represented the same valet and the same Bergamask. The harlequins have also assumed other names: they have been sometimes Tracagnins, Truffaldins, Gradelins, and Mezetins; but they have always been stupid Bergamasks. Their dress is an exact representation of that of a poor devil who has picked up pieces of stuffs of different colors to patch his dress; his hat corresponds with his mendicity, and the hare's tail with which it is ornamented is still common in the dress of the peasantry of Bergamo.

I have thus, I trust, sufficiently demonstrated the origin and employment of the four masks of the Italian comedy; it now remains for me to mention the effects resulting from them. The mask must always be very prejudicial to the action of the performer, either in joy or sorrow: whether he be in love, cross, or good-humored, the same features are always exhibited; and however he may gesticulate and vary the tone, he can never convey by the countenance, which is the interpreter of the heart, the different passions with which he is inwardly agitated. The masks of the Greeks and Romans were a sort of speaking-trumpets, invented for the purpose of conveying the sound through the vast extent of their amphitheatres. Passion and sentiment were not in those times carried to the pitch of delicacy now actually necessary. The actor must in our days possess a soul; and the soul under a mask is like a fire under ashes. These were the reasons which induced me to endeavor the reform of the Italian theatre, and to supply the place of farces with comedies. But the complaints became louder and louder: I was disgusted with the two parties, and I endeavored to satisfy both; I undertook to produce a few pieces merely sketched, without ceasing to give comedies of character. I employed the masks in the former, and I displayed a more noble and interesting comic humor in the others: each participated in the species of pleasure with which they were most delighted; with time and patience I brought about a reconciliation between them; and I had the satisfaction at length to see myself authorized in following my own taste, which became in a few years the most general and prevailing in Italy. I willingly pardoned the partisans of the comedians with masks the injuries they laid to my charge; for they were very able amateurs, who had the merit of giving themselves an interest to sketched comedies.

PURISTS AND PEDANTRY

From the ‹Memoirs of Carlo Goldoni›

My journey to Parma, and the pension and diploma conferred on me, excited the envy and rage of my adversaries. They had reported at Venice during my absence that I was dead; and there was a monk who had even the temerity to say he had been at my funeral. On arriving home safe and sound, the evil-disposed began to display their irritation at my good fortune. It was not the authors, my antagonists, who tormented me, but the partisans of the different theatres of Venice.

I was defended by literary men, who entertained a favorable opinion of me; and this gave rise to a warfare in which I was very innocently the victim of the irritation which had been excited. My system has always been never to mention the names of my adversaries: but I cannot avoid expressing the honor which I feel in proclaiming those of my advocates. Father Roberti, a Jesuit, at present the Abbé Roberti, one of the most illustrious poets of the suppressed society, published a poem in blank verse, entitled ‹Comedy›; and by dwelling on the reformation effected by me, and analyzing several scenes in my pieces, he encouraged his countrymen and mine to follow the example and the system of the Venetian author. Count Verri, a Milanese, followed the Abbé Roberti. . . . Other patricians of Venice wrote in my favor, on account of the disputes which were every day growing warmer and warmer. . . . Every day witnessed some new composition for or against me; but I had this advantage,— that those who interested themselves for me, from their manners, their talents, and their reputation, were among the most prudent and distinguished men in Italy.

One of the articles for which I was most keenly attacked was a violation of the purity of the language. I was a Venetian, and I had had the disadvantage of sucking in with my mother's milk the use of a very agreeable and seductive patois, which however was not Tuscan. I learned by principle, and cultivated by reading, the language of the good Italian authors; but first impressions will return at times, notwithstanding every attention used in avoiding them. I had undertaken a journey into Tuscany, where I remained for four years, with the view of becoming familiar with the language; and I printed the first edition of my works at Florence, under the eyes and the criticism of the learned of that place, that I might purify them from errors of language. All my precautions were insufficient to satisfy the rigorists: I always failed in one thing or other; and I was perpetually reproached with the original sin of Venetianism.

Amidst all this tedious trifling, I recollected one day that Tasso had been worried his whole lifetime by the Academicians della Crusca, who maintained that his ‘Jerusalem Delivered’ had not passed through the sieve which is the emblem of their society. I was then in my closet, and I turned my eyes towards the twelve quarto volumes of the works of that author, and exclaimed, “Oh heavens! must no one write in the Italian language who has not been born in Tuscany?” I turned up mechanically the five volumes of the Dictionary della Crusca, where I found more than six hundred words, and a number of expressions, approved of by the academy and rejected by the world; I ran over several ancient authors considered as classical, whom it would be impossible to imitate in the present day without censure; and I came to this conclusion — that we must write in good Italian, but write at the same time so as to be understood in every corner of Italy. Tasso was therefore wrong in reforming his poem to please the Academicians della Crusca: his ‘Jerusalem Delivered’ is read by everybody, while nobody thinks of reading his ‘Jerusalem Conquered.’

A POET'S OLD AGE

From the ‘Memoirs of Carlo Goldoni’

I RETURN to my regimen, — you will say here also, perhaps, that I ought to omit it: you are in the right; but all this is in my head, and I must be delivered of it by degrees; I cannot spare you a single comma. After dinner I am not fond of either working or walking. Sometimes I go to the theatre, but I am most generally in parties till nine o'clock in the evening. I always return before ten o'clock. I take two or three small cakes with a glass of wine and water, and this is the whole of my supper. I converse with my wife till midnight; I very soon fall asleep, and pass the night tranquilly.

It sometimes happens to me, as well as every other person, to have my head occupied with something capable of retarding my sleep. In this case I have a certain remedy to lull myself asleep, and it is this: I had long projected a vocabulary of the Venetian dialect, and I had even communicated my intention to the public, who are still in expectation of it. While laboring at this tedious and disgusting work, I soon discovered that it threw me asleep. I laid it therefore aside, and I profited by its narcotic faculty. Whenever I feel my mind agitated by any moral cause, I take at random some word of my national language and translate it into Tuscan and French. In the same manner I pass in review all the words which follow in the alphabetical order, and I am sure to fall asleep at the third or fourth version. My recipe has never once failed me. It is not difficult to demonstrate the cause and effect of this phenomenon. A painful idea requires to be replaced by an opposite or indifferent idea; and the agitation of the mind once calmed, the senses become tranquil and are deadened by sleep.

But this remedy, however excellent, might not be useful to every one. A man of too keen and feeling a disposition would not succeed. The temperament must be such as that with which nature has favored me. My moral qualities bear a resemblance to my physical: I dread neither cold nor heat, and I neither allow myself to be inflamed by rage nor intoxicated by joy. . . .

I am now arrived at the year 1787, which is the eightieth of my age, and that to which I have limited the course of my Memoirs. I have completed my eightieth year; my work is also finished. All is over, and I proceed to send my volumes to the press. This last chapter does not therefore touch on the events of the current year; but I have still some duties to discharge. I must begin with returning thanks to those persons who have reposed so much confidence in me as to honor me with their subscriptions.

I do not speak of the kindness and favors of the King and court; this is not the place to mention them. I have named in my work some of my friends and even some of my protectors. I beg pardon of them: if I have done so without their permission, it is not through vanity; the occasion has suggested it; their names have dropped from my pen, the heart has seized on the instant, and the hand has not been unwilling. For example, the following is one of the fortunate occasions I allude to. I was unwell a few days ago; the Count Alfieri did me the honor to call on me; I knew his talents, but his conversation impressed on me the wrong which I should have done in omitting him. He is a very intelligent and learned literary man, who principally excels in the art of Sophocles and Euripides, and after these great models he has framed his tragedies. They have gone through two editions in Italy, and are at present in the press of Didot at Paris. I shall enter into no details respecting them, as they may be seen and judged of by every one.

During my convalescence M. Caccia, a banker in Paris, my friend and countryman, sent me a book addressed to him from Italy for me. It was a collection of French epigrams and madrigals, translated into Italian by the Count Roncali, of the city of Brescia in the Venetian dominions. This charming poet has merely translated the thoughts; he has said the same things in fewer words, and he has fallen upon as brilliant and striking points in his own language as those of his originals.

I had the honor of seeing M. Roncali twelve years ago at Paris, and he allows me to hope that I shall have the good fortune to see him again. This is infinitely flattering to me; but I earnestly entreat him to make haste, as my career is far advanced, and what is still worse, I am extremely fatigued. I have undertaken too long and too laborious a work for my age, and I have employed three years on it, always dreading lest I should not have the pleasure of seeing it finished. However, I am still in life, thanks to God, and I flatter myself that I shall see my volumes printed, distributed, and read. If they be not praised, I hope at least they will not be despised. I shall not be accused of vanity or presumption in daring to hope for some share of favor for my Memoirs; for had I thought that I should absolutely displease, I would not have taken so much pains; and if in the good and ill which I say of myself, the balance inclines to the favorable side, I owe more to nature than to study. All the application employed by me in the construction of my pieces has been that of not disfiguring nature, and all the care taken by me in my Memoirs has been that of telling only the truth. The criticism of my pieces may have the correction and improvement of comedy in view; but the criticism of my Memoirs will be of no advantage to literature. However, if any writer should think proper to employ his time on me for the sole purpose of vexing me, he would lose his labor. I am of a pacific disposition; I have always preserved my coolness of character; at my age I read little, and I read only amusing books.

THE CAFÉ

[A few of the opening scenes from one of the popular Venetian comedies are here given with occasional abridgment. They illustrate the entirely practical theatrical skill of Goldoni's plots, his rapid development of his characters, and the sound morality which prevails without being aggressively prominent.

The permanent scene represents a small open square in Venice, or a rather wide street, with three shops. The middle one is in use as a café. To the right is a barber's. The one on the left is a gambling-house. Beyond the barber's, across a street, is seen the dancers' house, and beyond the gamblers' a hotel with practicable doors and windows.]

Ridolfo, *master of the café,* Trappolo, *a waiter, and other waiters*

RIDOLFO — Come, children, look alive, be wide awake, ready to serve the guests civilly and properly.

Trappolo — Master dear, to tell you the truth, this early rising doesn't suit my complexion a bit. There's no one in sight. We could have slept another hour yet.

Ridolfo — They'll be coming presently. Besides, 'tis not so very early. Don't you see? The barber is open, he's in his shop working on hair. And look! the playing-house is open too.

Trappolo — Oh, yes, indeed. The gambling-house has been open a good bit. They've made a night of it.

Ridolfo — Good. Master Pandolfo will have had a good profit.

Trappolo — That dog always has good profit. He wins on the cards, he profits by usury, he shares with the sharpers. He is sure of all the money of whoever enters there. That poor Signor Eugenio — he has taken a header!

Ridolfo — Just look at him, how little sense he has! With a wife, a young woman of grace and sense,—but he runs after every petticoat; and then he plays like a madman. But come, go roast the coffee and make a fresh supply.

Trappolo — Shan't I warm over yesterday's supply?

Ridolfo — No, make it good.

Trappolo — Master has a short memory. How long since this shop opened?

Ridolfo — You know very well. 'Tis about eight months.

Trappolo — Then 'tis time for a change.

Ridolfo — What do you mean by that?

Trappolo — When a new shop opens, they make perfect coffee. After six months,— hot water, thin broth. [*Exit.*]

Ridolfo — He's a wit. I'm in hopes he'll help the shop. To a shop where there's a fun-maker every one goes.

Pandolfo, *keeper of the gambling-house, comes in, rubbing his eyes sleepily*

Ridolfo — Master Pandolfo, will you have coffee?

Pandolfo — Yes, if you please.

Ridolfo — Boys, serve coffee for Master Pandolfo. Be seated. Make yourself comfortable.

Pandolfo — No, no, I must drink it at once and get back to work.

Ridolfo — Are they playing yet in the shop?

Pandolfo — They are busy at two tables.

Ridolfo — So early?

Pandolfo — They are at it since yesterday.

Ridolfo — What game?

Pandolfo — An innocent game: «first and second» [*i. e.*, faro].

Ridolfo — And how does it go?

Pandolfo — For me it goes well.

Ridolfo — Have you amused yourself playing too?

Pandolfo — Yes, I took a little hand also.

Ridolfo — Excuse me, my friend; I've no business to meddle in your affairs, but — it doesn't look well when the master of the shop plays; because if he loses he's laughed at, and if he wins he's suspected.

Pandolfo — I am content if they haven't the laugh on me. As for the rest, let them suspect as they please; I pay no attention.

Ridolfo — Dear friend, we are neighbors; I shouldn't want you to get into trouble. You know, by your play before you have brought up in the court.

Pandolfo — I'm easily satisfied. I won a pair of sequins, and wanted no more.

Ridolfo — That's right. Pluck the quail without making it cry out. From whom did you win them?

Pandolfo — A jeweler's boy.

Ridolfo — Bad. Very bad. That tempts the boys to rob their masters.

Pandolfo — Oh, don't moralize to me. Let the greenhorns stay at home. I keep open for any one who wants to play.

Ridolfo — And has Signor Eugenio been playing this past night?

Pandolfo — He's playing yet. He hasn't dined, he hasn't slept, and he's lost all his money.

Ridolfo [*aside*]—Poor young man! [*Aloud.*] And how much has he lost?

Pandolfo—A hundred sequins in cash: and now he is playing on credit.

Ridolfo—With whom is he playing?

Pandolfo—With the count.

Ridolfo—And whom else?

Pandolfo—With him alone.

Ridolfo—It seems to me an honest man shouldn't stand by and see people assassinated.

Pandolfo—Oho, my friend, if you're going to be so thin-skinned you'll make little money.

Ridolfo—I don't care for that. Till now I have been in service, and did my duty honestly. I saved a few pennies, and with the help of my old master, who was Signor Eugenio's father, you know, I have opened this shop. With it I mean to live honorably and not disgrace my profession.

[*People from the gambling-shop call* «*Cards!*»]

Pandolfo [*answering*]—At your service.

Ridolfo—For mercy's sake, get poor Signor Eugenio away from the table.

Pandolfo—For all me, he may lose his shirt: I don't care. [*Starts out.*]

Ridolfo—And the coffee—shall I charge it?

Pandolfo—Not at all: we'll deal a card for it.

Ridolfo—I'm no greenhorn, my friend.

Pandolfo—Oh well, what does it matter? You know my visitors make trade for you. I am surprised that you trouble yourself about these little matters. [*Exit.*] . . .

A gentleman, Don Marzio, *enters*

Ridolfo [*aside*]—Here is the man who never stops talking, and always must have it his own way.

Marzio—Coffee.

Ridolfo—At once, sir.

Marzio—What's the news, Ridolfo?

Ridolfo—I couldn't say, sir.

Marzio—Has no one appeared here at your café yet?

Ridolfo—'Tis quite early still.

Marzio — Early? It has struck nine already.

Ridolfo — Oh no, honored sir, 'tis not seven yet.

Marzio — Get away with your nonsense.

Ridolfo — I assure you, it hasn't struck seven yet.

Marzio — Get out, stupid.

Ridolfo — You abuse me without reason, sir.

Marzio — I counted the strokes just now, and I tell you it is nine. Besides, look at my watch: it never goes wrong. [*Shows it.*]

Ridolfo — Very well, then; if your watch is never wrong,— it says a quarter to seven.

Marzio — What? That can't be. [*Takes out his eye-glass and looks.*]

Ridolfo — What do you say?

Marzio — My watch is wrong. It is nine o'olock. I heard it.

Ridolfo — Where did you buy that watch?

Marzio — I ordered it from London.

Ridolfo — They cheated you.

Marzio — Cheated me? How so? It is the very first quality.

Ridolfo — If it were a good one, it wouldn't be two hours wrong.

Marzio — It is always exactly right.

Ridolfo — But the watch says a quarter to seven, and you say it is nine.

Marzio — My watch is right.

Ridolfo — Then it really is a little before seven, as I said.

Marzio — You're an insolent fellow. My watch is right: you talk foolishly, and I've half a mind to box your ears. [*His coffee is brought.*]

Ridolfo [*aside*] — Oh, what a beast!

Marzio — Have you seen Signor Eugenio?

Ridolfo —No, honored sir.

Marzio — At home, of course, petting his wife. What an uxorious fellow! Always a wife! Always a wife! [*Drinks his coffee.*]

Ridolfo — Anything but his wife. He's been gambling all night at Pandolfo's.

Marzio — Just as I tell you. Always gambling.

Ridolfo [*aside*] — «Always gambling,» «Always his wife,» «Always» the Devil; I hope he'll catch him!

Marzio — He came to me the other day in all secrecy, to beg me to lend him ten sequins on a pair of earrings of his wife's.

Ridolfo — Well, you know, every man is liable to have these little difficulties; but they don't care to have them known, and that is doubtless why he came to you, certain that you would tell no one.

Marzio — Oh, I say nothing. I help all, and take no credit for it. See! Here are his wife's earrings. I lent him ten sequins on them. Do you think I am secured?

Ridolfo — I'm no judge, but I think so.

Marzio — Halloa, Trappolo. [*Trappolo enters.*] Here; go to the jeweler's yonder, show him these earrings of Signor Eugenio's wife, and ask him for me if they are security for ten sequins that I lent him.

Trappolo — And it doesn't harm Signor Eugenio to make his affairs public?

Marzio — I am a person with whom a secret is safe. [*Exit Trappolo.*] Say, Ridolfo, what do you know of that dancer over there?

Ridolfo — I really know nothing about her.

Marzio — I've been told the Count Leandro is her protector.

Ridolfo — To be frank, I don't care much for other people's affairs.

Marzio — But 'tis well to know things, to govern one's self accordingly. She has been under his protection for some time now, and the dancer's earnings have paid the price of the protection. Instead of spending anything, he devours all the poor wretch has. Indeed, he forces her to do what she should not. Oh, what a villain!

Ridolfo — But I am here all day, and I can swear that no one goes to her house except Leandro.

Marzio — It has a back door. Fool! Fool! Always the back door. Fool!

Ridolfo — I attend to my shop: if she has a back door, what is it to me? I put my nose into no one's affairs.

Marzio — Beast! Do you speak like that to a gentleman of my station?

[This character of Don Marzio the slanderer is the most effective one in the comedy. He finally brings upon himself the bitterest ill-will of all the other characters, and feels himself driven out of Venice, «a land in which all men live at ease, all enjoy liberty, peace, and amusement, if only they know how to be prudent, discreet, honorable.»]

Translated for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature,› by William C. Lawton

MEÏR AARON GOLDSCHMIDT

(1819–1887)

In the first line of his memoirs Goldschmidt states that he was of «the tribe of Levi,» a fact of which he was never unconscious, and which has given him his peculiar position in modern Danish literature as the exponent of the family and social life of the orthodox Jew. Brandes writes of Goldschmidt that: «In spite of his cosmopolitan spirit, he has always loved two nationalities above all others and equally well,—the Jewish and the Danish. He has looked upon himself as a sort of noble-born bastard; and with the bat of the fable he has said alternately to the mice, ‘I am a mouse,’ and to the birds, ‘I have wings.’ He has endeavored to give his answer to the questions of the Jew's place in modern culture.»

Goldschmidt

Goldschmidt was born on the 26th of October, 1819. His early childhood was spent partly in the country, in the full freedom of country life, and partly in the city, where he was sent to school in preparation for the professional career his father had planned for him, in preference to a business life like his own. Goldschmidt took part in the religious instruction of the school, at the same time observing the customs of the Jewish ritual at home without a full understanding of its meaning,—somewhat as he was taught to read Hebrew without being able to translate a word of it into Danish. In the senior class his religious instructor let him join in the Bible reading, but refused to admit him to the catechism class; as a consequence he failed to answer a few questions on his examination papers, and fell just short of a maximum. This made him feel that he was ostracized by his Jewish birth, and put an end to his desire for further academic studies.

At the age of eighteen he began his journalistic career as editor of a provincial paper, the care of which cost him a lawsuit and subjected him to a year's censorship. Soon after, he sold the paper for two hundred dollars, and with this money he started the Copenhagen weekly The Corsair, which in no time gained a large reading public, and whose Friday appearance was awaited with weekly increasing interest. The editorials were given up to æsthetic and poetic discussions, and the small matter treated the questions of the day with a pointed wit that soon made The Corsair as widely feared as it was eagerly read. He had reached only the third number when it was put under censorship, and lawsuits followed in quick succession. Goldschmidt did not officially assume the responsibility of editor, although it was an open secret that he was author of most of the articles; publicly the blows were warded off by pretended owners whose names were often changed. One of the few men whom The Corsair left unattacked was Sören Kierkegaard, for whose literary and scholarly talents Goldschmidt had great respect. That The Corsair was under the ban of the law, so to speak, and had brought him even a four-days' imprisonment, was a small matter to Goldschmidt; but when Kierkegaard passed a scathing moral judgment on the paper, Goldschmidt sold out for four thousand dollars and started with this sum on his travels, «to get rid of wit and learn something better.»

In 1847 he was again back in Copenhagen, and began life anew as editor of North and South, a weekly containing excellent æsthetic and critical studies, but mainly important on account of its social and political influence. Already, in the time of The Corsair, Goldschmidt had begun his work as novelist with ‘A Jew,’ written in 1843–45, and had taken possession of the field which became his own. It was a promising book, that met with immediate appreciation. Even Kierkegaard forgot for a moment the editor of The Corsair in his praise. The Jews, however, looked upon the descriptions of intimate Jewish family life somewhat as a desecration of the Holy of Holies; and if broad-minded enough to forgive this, thought it unwise to accentuate the Jew's position as an element apart in social life. It argues a certain narrowness in Goldschmidt that he has never been able to refrain from striking this note, and Brandes blames him for the bad taste of «continually serving his grandmother with sharp sauce.»

Goldschmidt wrote another long novel, ‘Homeless’; but it is principally in his shorter works, such as ‘Love Stories from Many Countries,’ ‘Maser,’ and ‘Avromche Nightingale,’ that he has left a great and good gift to Danish literature. The shorter his composition, the more perfect was his treatment. He was above all a stylist.

He always had a tendency to mysticism, and in his last years he was greatly taken up with his theory of Nemesis, on which he wrote a book, containing much that is suggestive but also much that is obviously the result of the wish to make everything conform to a pet theory. His lasting importance will be as the first and foremost influence on modern Danish prose.

ASSAR AND MIRJAM

From ‹Love Stories from Many Countries›

Assar, son of Juda, a valiant and jealous youth, came walking toward Modin, when from one of the hills he saw a great sight on the plain. Here warriors rode a chariot race in a great circle; many people stood about, calling loudly to the drivers and the spirited horses. Yonder were horsemen in golden armor, trying to catch rings on their spears; and drums were beaten in honor of the winner. On the outskirts of the plain was a little grove of olive-trees; it was not dense. In the grove stood a nude woman hewn in marble; her hair was of gold and her eyes were black, and young girls danced around her with garlands of flowers.

Then Assar said:—«Woe unto us! These are Jewish maidens dancing around the idol, and these are Greek men carrying arms on our holy ground and playing at games as if they were in their home! and no Jewish man makes the game dangerous for them!»

He went down the hill and came to a thicket reaching down to a little brook. On the other side of the brook stood a Greek centurion, a young man, and he was talking to a girl, who stood on this side of the brook on the edge of the thicket.

The warrior said:—«Thou sayest that thy God forbids thee to go over into the grove. What a dark and unfriendly God they have given thee, beautiful child of Juda! He hates thy youth, and the joy of life, and the roses which ought to crown thy black hair. My gods are of a friendlier mind toward mortals. Every morning Apollo drives his glorious span over the arch of the heavens and lights warriors to their deeds; Selene's milder torch glows at night for lovers, and to those who have worshiped her in this life beautiful Aphrodite gives eternal life on her blessed isle. It is her statue standing in the grove. When thou givest thyself under her protection she gives thee in return a hero for thy faithful lover, and later on, graceful daughter of Juda, some god will set thee with thy radiant eyes among the stars, to be a light to mortals and a witness of the beauty of earthly love.»

The young girl might have answered; but at this moment Assar was near her, and she knew him, and he saw that it was Mirjam, Rabbi Mattathew's daughter,—the woman he loved, and who was his promised bride. She turned and followed him; but the warrior on the other side of the brook called out, « What right hast thou to lead this maiden away? »

Assar replied, « I have no right. »

« Then why dost thou go with him, sweet daughter of Juda? » cried the warrior.

Mirjam did not answer, but Assar said, « Because she has not yet given up serving her Master. »

« Who is her master? » asked the warrior. « I can buy thee freedom, my beautiful child! »

Assar replied, « I wish thou may'st see him. »*

The warrior, who could not cross the brook at this place, or anywhere near it, called as they went away, « Tell me thy master's name! »

Assar turned and answered, « I will beg him come to thee. »

A hill hid them from the eyes of the warrior, and Mirjam said, « Assar! »

Assar replied, « Mirjam! I have never loved thee as dearly as I do to-day — I do not know if it is a curse or a blessing which is in my veins. Thou hast listened to the words of the heathen. »

« I listened to them because he spoke kindly; but I have not betrayed the Lord nor thee. »

« Thou hast permitted his words to reach thy ear and thy soul. »

« What could I do, Assar? He spoke kindly. »

Assar stood still, and said to himself, « Yes, he spoke kindly. They do speak kindly. And they spoke kind words to the poor girls who danced around the idol in the grove. Had they spoken harsh and threatening words, they would not have danced. »

Again he stood still, and said to himself, « If they came using force, the rabbi would kill her and then himself, or she would throw herself from a rock of her own free will. But who can set a guard to watch over kind words? »

The third time he stood still, and said, « O Israel, thou canst not bear kind words! »

Mirjam thought that he suspected her; and she stood still and said, « I am a rabbi's daughter! »

Assar replied, « O Mirjam, I am Assar, and I will be the son of my own actions. »

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* « Whoever sees God must die. »

« For God's sake, » exclaimed Mirjam, « do not seek that warrior, and do not enter into a quarrel with him! He will kill thee or have thee put into prison. There is misery enough in Israel! The strangers have entered our towns. Let us bend our heads and await the will of God, but not challenge! Assar, I should die if anything happened to thee! »

« And what would I do if anything happened to thee! My head swims! Whither should I flee? Would thy father and thy brothers flee to the wilds of the mountains? »

« They have spoken of that. But there is no place to flee to and not much to flee from; for although the heathen have taken gold and goods, yet they are kind this time. »

Assar replied, « Oh yes, they are kind; I had almost forgotten it. Mirjam, if I go away wilt thou believe, and go on believing, that I go on God's errand? »

«Assar, a dark look from thee is dearer to me than the kindest from any heathen, and a word of thine is more to me than many witnesses. But do not leave me! Stay and protect me! »

« I go to protect thee! I go to the heights and to the depths to call forth the God of Israel. Await his coming! » . . .

Assar went to the King, Antiochus Epiphanes, bent low before him, and said, « May the Master of the world guide thy steps! »

The King looked at him well pleased, and asked his name; whereupon Assar answered that he was a man of the tribe of Juda.

The King said, « Few of thy countrymen come to serve me! »

Assar replied, « If thou wilt permit thy servant a bold word, King, the fault is thine. »

And when the King, astonished, asked how this might be, Assar answered, « Because thou art too kind, lord. »

The King turned to his adviser, and said laughingly, « When we took the treasures of the temple in Jerusalem, they found it hard enough. »

« O King, » said Assar, « silver and gold and precious stones can be regained, and the Israelites know this; but thou lettest them keep that which cannot be regained when once it is lost. »

The King answered quickly, « What is that? » and Assar replied:—« The Israelites have a God, who is very powerful but also very jealous. He has always helped them in the time of need if they held near to him and did not worship strange gods; for this his jealousy will not bear. When they do this he forsakes them. But thou, O King, hast taken their silver and gold and jewels, but hast let them keep the God who gives it all back to them. They know this; and so they smile at thee, and await that thou shalt be thrown into the dust by him, and they will arise his avengers, and persecute thy men."

The King paled; he remembered his loss in Egypt, and he feared that if the enemy pursued him he should find help in Israel; and he said, "What ought we to do?"

Assar replied: "If thou wilt permit thy servant to utter his humble advice, thou shouldst use severity and forbid their praying to the God they call Jehovah, and order them to pray to thy gods."

The King's adviser looked at Assar and asked, "Hast thou offered up sacrifice to our gods?"

Assar replied, "I am ready."

They led him to the altar, and on the way thither Assar said:—"Lord, all-powerful God! Thou who seest the heart and not alone the deeds of the hand, be my witness! It is written: 'And it shall happen in that same hour that I shall wipe out the name of idols out of the land, and they shall be remembered no more, and the unclean spirit shall I cause to depart from the country.' Do thou according to thy word, O Lord! Amen!"

When the sacrifice was brought, Assar was dressed in festive robes on the word of the King, and a place was given him among the King's friends, and orders were sent out throughout the country, according to what he had said.

And to Modin too came the King's messenger; and when the rabbi heard of it, he went with his five sons to the large prayer-house, and read maledictions over those who worshiped idols and blessings over those who were faithful to Jehovah. And those who were present noticed that the rabbi's eldest son, Judas Maccabæus, carried a sword under his mantle.

And when they came out of the prayer-house they saw that a heathen altar had been built, and there was a Jew making his sacrifice; and when Rabbi Mattathew saw this, he hastened to the spot and seized the knife of sacrifice and thrust it into the Jew's breast. The centurion who stood by, and who was the same that had previously talked to Mirjam the rabbi's daughter at the brook, would kill the rabbi; but Judas Maccabæus drew his sword quickly, and struck the centurion in the throat and killed him. Then the King's men gathered; but the street was narrow, and Judas Maccabæus went last and shielded all, until the night came and they had got their women together and could flee to the mountains. And then began the fight of the men of Juda against the Macedonians, the Greeks, and the Assyrians, and they killed those of the King's men who pursued them into the mountains.

Then King Antiochus the temple-robber said to Assar, « This is thy advice! » to which Assar replied: « No, King; this is the advice of thy warriors, since they allow the rebels to escape and do not treat them without mercy. For this know, O King, that so long as thou art merciful to this people there is no hope. »

Then there were issued strict orders to torture and kill all who refused to obey the King's command; and all those in Israel in whom Jehovah was still living rose to fight with Mattathew and his sons, and men and women, yea, children even, were moved to suffer death for the Lord and his law.

But at this time it happened that King Antiochus the temple-destroyer was visited by his shameful disease, and he sent messengers with rich gifts to all oracles and temples to seek help; but they could find none.

Then he said to Assar, « Thou saidst once that the God of Israel was a mighty God; could not *he* cure me of my disease? »

Assar replied: « I have indeed heard from my childhood that the God of Israel is a mighty God; but O King, thou wilt not give in to that hard people and make peace with their God? »

The King answered, « I must live! How can he be pacified? »

Assar said, « It is too heavy a sacrifice for so great a king as thee. Their wise men assert that God has given them the country for a possession, and it would be necessary for thee not only to allow them to worship their God, but also to call back thy men and make a covenant with them so that they should merely pay a tribute to thee. But this is more than I can advise. »

The King answered, « Much does a man give for his life. Dost thou believe that he is a great God? »

« I have seen a great proof of it, lord. »

« What is that? »

« This: that even a greatness like thine was as nothing to his. »

« It is not a dishonor to be smaller than the Immortals. Go and prepare all, according to what we have spoken. »

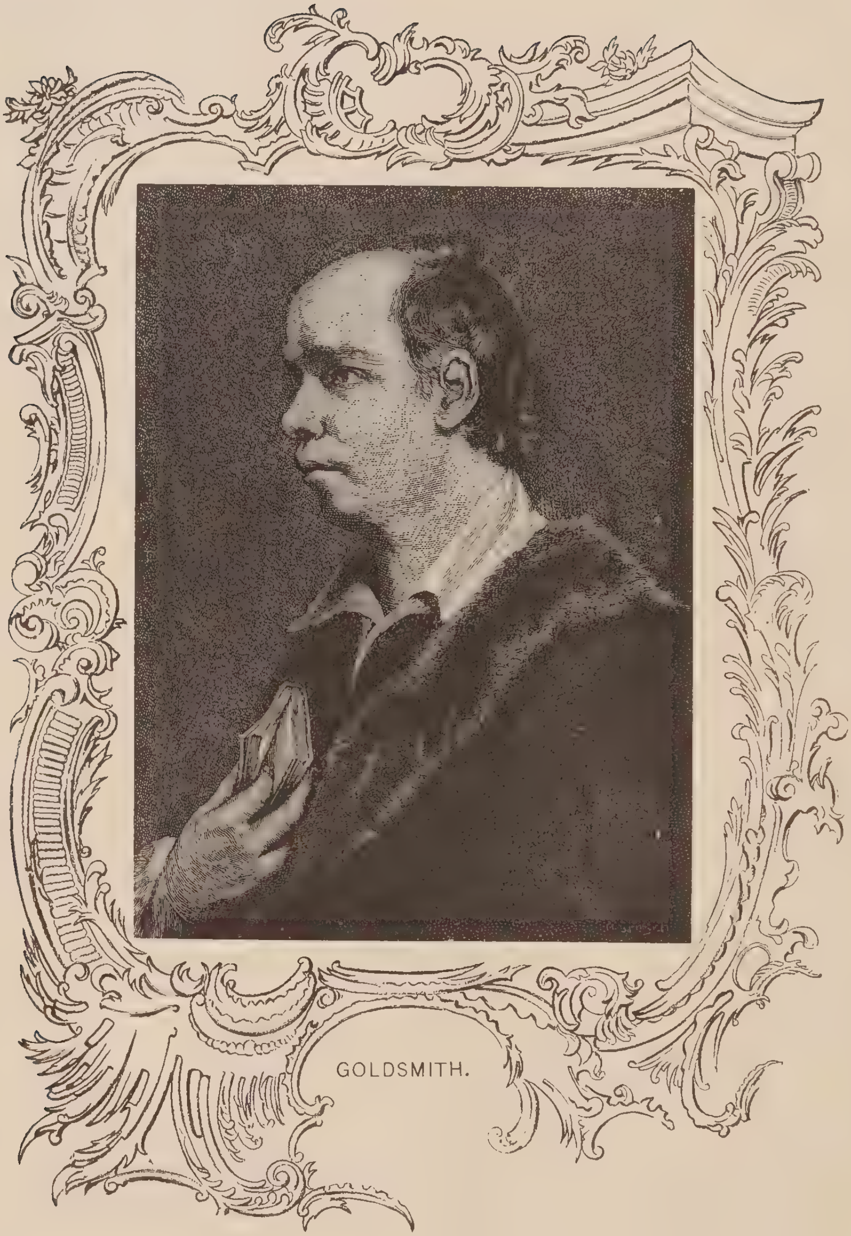
Then Assar prepared all and had the King's men called back, and promised the inhabitants peace and led the King on his way to Jerusalem; and they passed by Modin.

And the King's sufferings being very great, he had himself carried into the house of prayers, before the holy, and he prayed to the God of Israel. And the men of Juda stood around him; they stood high and he lay low, and they had saved their souls.

But when the King was carried out, one of the Maccabæan warriors recognized Assar and cried out, « Thou hast offered up sacrifices to idols, and from thee have come the evil counsels which have cost precious blood! Thou shalt be wiped off the earth! »

He drew his sword and aimed at him, but Mirjam, who had come up, threw herself between them with the cry, « He called forth Israel's God! » And the steel which was meant for him pierced her.

Translated for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature,› by Olga Flinch.



GOLDSMITH.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

(1728–1774)

BY CHARLES MILLS GAYLEY

Oliver Goldsmith was born at Pallas, County Longford, Ireland, November 10th, 1728. That was the year in which Pope issued his 'Dunciad,' Gay his 'Beggar's Opera,' and Thomson his 'Spring.' Goldsmith's father was a clergyman of the Established Church. In 1730 the family removed to Lissoy, a better living than that of Pallas. Oliver's school days in and around Westmeath were unsatisfactory; so also his course at Trinity, 1744 to 1749. For the next two years he loafed at Ballymahon, living on his mother, then a widow, and making vain attempts to take orders, to teach, to enter a law course, to sail for America. He was a bad sixpence. Finally his uncle Contarine, who saw good stuff in the awkward, ugly, humorous, and reckless youth, got him off to Edinburgh, where he studied medicine till 1754.

In 1754 he is studying, or pretending to study, at Leyden. In 1755 and 1756 he is singing, fluting, and otherwise «beating» his way through Europe, whence he returns with a mythical M. B. degree. From 1756 to 1759 he is in London, teaching, serving an apothecary, practicing medicine, reading proof, writing as a hack, planning to practice surgery in Coromandel, failing to qualify as a hospital mate, and in general only not starving. In 1759 Dr. Percy finds him in Green Arbor Court amid a colony of washerwomen, writing an 'Enquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe.' Next follows the appearance of that work, and his acquaintance with publishers and men of letters. In 1761, with Percy, comes Johnson to visit him. In 1764 Goldsmith is one of the members of the famous Literary Club, where he counts among his friends, besides Percy and Johnson, Reynolds, Boswell, Garrick, Burke, and others who shone with their own or reflected light. The rest of his life, spent principally in or near London, is associated with his literary career. He died April 4th, 1774, and was buried near the Temple Church.

Goldsmith was an essayist and critic, a story-writer, a poet, a comic dramatist, and a literary drudge: the last all the time, the others «between whiles.» His drudgery produced such works as the 'Memoirs of Voltaire,' the 'Life of Nash,' two Histories of England, Histories of Rome and Greece, Lives of Parnell and Bolingbroke.

The ‹History of Animated Nature› was undertaken as an industry, but it reads, as Johnson said, «like a Persian tale,»—and of course, the more Persian the less like nature. For the prose of Goldsmith writing for a suit of clothes or for immortality is all of a piece, inimitable. «Nothing,» says he, in his ‹Essay on Taste,› «has been so often explained, and yet so little understood, as simplicity in writing. . . . It is no other than beautiful nature, without affectation or extraneous ornament.»

This ingenuous elegance is the accent of Goldsmith's work in verse and prose. It is nature improved, not from without but by exquisite and esoteric art, the better to prove its innate virtue and display its artless charm. Such a style is based upon a delicate «sensibility to the graces of natural and moral beauty and decorum.» Hence the ideographic power, the directness, the sympathy, the lambent humor that characterize the ‹Essays,› the ‹Vicar,› the ‹Deserted Village,› and ‹She Stoops to Conquer.› This is the «plain language of ancient faith and sincerity» that, pretending to no novelty, renovated the prose of the eighteenth century, knocked the stilts from under Addison and Steele, tipped half the Latinity out of Johnson, and readjusted his ballast. Goldsmith goes without sprawling or tiptoeing; he sails without rolling. He borrows the carelessness but not the ostentation of the Spectator; the dignity but not the ponderosity of ‹Rasselas›; and produces the prose of natural ease, the sweetest English of the century. It in turn prefaced the way for Charles Lamb, Hunt, and Sydney Smith. «It were to be wished that we no longer found pleasure with the inflated style,» writes Goldsmith in his ‹Polite Learning.› «We should dispense with loaded epithet and dressing up trifles with dignity. . . . Let us, instead of writing finely, try to write naturally; not hunt after lofty expressions to deliver mean ideas, nor be forever gaping when we only mean to deliver a whisper.»

Just this naturalness constitutes the charm of the essay on ‹The Bee› (1759), and of the essays collected in 1765. We do not read him for information: whether he knows more or less of his subject, whether he writes of Charles XII., or Dress, the Opera, Poetry, or Education, we read him for simplicity and humor. Still, his critical estimates, while they may not always square with ours, evince not only good sense and æsthetic principle, but a range of reading not at all ordinary. When he condemns Hamlet's great soliloquy we may smile, but in judicial respect for the father of our drama he yields to none of his contemporaries. The selections that he includes in his ‹Beauties of English Poetry› would argue a conventional taste; but in his ‹Essay on Poetry Distinguished from the Other Arts,› he not only defines poetry in terms that might content the Wordsworthians, he also to a certain extent anticipates Wordsworth's estimate of poetic figures.

While he makes no violent breach with the classical school, he prophesies the critical doctrine of the nineteenth century. He calls for the «energetic language of simple nature, which is now grown into disrepute.» «If the production does not keep nature in view, it will be destitute of truth and probability, without which the beauties of imitation cannot subsist.» Still he by no means falls into the quagmire of realism. For, continues he, «if on the other hand the imitation is so close as to be mistaken for nature, the pleasure will then cease, because the *μίμησις*, or imitation, no longer appears.»

Even when wrong, Goldsmith is generally half-way right; and this is especially true of the critical judgments contained in his first published book. The impudence of 'The Enquiry' (1759) is delicious. What this young Irishman, fluting it through Europe some five years before, had *not* learned about the 'Condition of Polite Learning' in its principal countries, might fill a ponderous folio. What he did learn, eked out with harmless misstatement, flashes of inspiration, and a clever argument to prove that criticism has always been the foe of letters, managed to fill a respectable duodecimo, and brought him to the notice of publishers and scholars.

The essay has catholicity, independence, and wit, and it carries itself with whimsical ease. Every sentence steps out sprightly. Of the French Encyclopédies: «Wits and dunces contribute their share, and Diderot as well as Desmaretz are candidates for oblivion. The genius of the first supplies the gale of favor, and the latter adds the useful ballast of stupidity.» Of the Germans: «They write through volumes, while they do not think through a page. . . . Were angels to write books, they never would write folios.» And again: «If criticism could have improved the taste of a people, the Germans would have been the most polite nation alive.» That settles the Encyclopedias and the Germans. So each nationality is sententiously reviewed and dismissed with an epigram that even to-day sounds not altogether unjust, rather amusing and urbane than acrimonious.

But it was not until Goldsmith began the series of letters in the Public Ledger (1760), that was afterwards published as 'The Citizen of the World,' that he took London. These letters purport to be from a philosophic Chinaman in Europe to his friends at home. Grave, gay, serene, ironical, they were at once an amusing image and a genial censor of current manners and morals. They are no less creative than critical; equally classic for the characters they contain: the Gentleman in Black, Beau Tibbs and his wife, the pawnbroker's widow, Tim Syllabub, and the procession of minor personages, romantic or ridiculous, but unique,—equally classic for these characters and for the satire of the conception. These are Goldsmith's best sketches. Though the prose is not always precise, it seems to be clear, and is simple. The writer cares more for the judicious than the sublime; for the quaint, the comic, and the agreeable than the pathetic. He chuckles with sly laughter — genial, sympathetic; he looses his arrow phosphorescent with wit, but not barbed, dipped in something subacid,— straight for the heart. Not Irving alone, but Thackeray, stands in line of descent from the Goldsmith of the ‘Citizen.’

‘The Traveller,’ polished *ad unguem*, appeared in 1764, and placed Goldsmith in the first rank of poets then living; but of that later. There is good reason for believing that his masterpiece in prose, ‘The Vicar of Wakefield,’ had been written as early as 1762, although it was not published until 1766. It made Goldsmith's mark as a story-teller. One can readily imagine how, after the grim humor of Smollett, the broad and *risqué* realism of Fielding, the loitering of Sterne, and the moralizing of Richardson, the public would seize with a sense of relief upon this unpretentious chronicle of a country clergyman's life: his peaceful home, its ruin, its restoration. Not because the narrative was quieter and simpler, shorter and more direct than other narratives, but because to its humor, realism, grace, and depth it added the charity of First Corinthians Thirteenth. England soon discovered that the borders of the humanities had been extended; that the Vicar and his «durable» wife, Moses, Olivia with the pre-natal tendency to romance, Sophia, the graceless Jenkinson,— the habit and temper of the whole,— were a new province. The prose idyl, with all its beauty and charity, does not entitle Goldsmith to rank with the great novelists; but of its kind, in spite of faults of inaccuracy, improbability, and impossibility, it is first and best. Goethe read and re-read it with moral and æsthetic benefit; and the spirit of Goldsmith is not far to seek in ‘Hermann and Dorothea.’ ‘The Vicar’ is perhaps the most popular of English classics in foreign lands.

In poetry, if Goldsmith did not write much, it was for lack of opportunity. What he did write is good, nearly all of it. The philosophy of ‘The Traveller’ (1764) and the political economy of ‘The Deserted Village’ (1770) may be dubious, but the poetry is true. There is in both a heartiness which discards the formalized emotion, prefers the touch of nature and the homely adjective. The characteristic is almost feminine in the description of Auburn: «*Dear* lovely bowers»; it is inevitable, artless, in ‘The Traveller’: «His first, best country ever is at home.» But on the other hand, the *curiosa felicitas* marks every line, the nice selection of just the word or phrase richest in association, redolent of tradition, harmonious, classically proper, but still natural, true, and apt. «My heart untravell'd fondly turns to thee»—not a word but is hearty; and for all that, the line is stamped with the academic authority of centuries: «Cœlum, non animum mutant, qui trans mare currunt.» Both poems are characterized by the infrequency of epithet and figure,—the infrequency that marks sincerity and that heightens pleasure,—and by a cunning in the use of proper names, resonant, remote, suggestive: «On Idra's cliffs or Arno's shelvy side,»—the cunning of a musical poem. Both poems vibrate with personality, recall the experience of the writer. It would be hard to choose between them; but 'The Deserted Village' strikes the homelier chord, comes nearer, with its natural pathos, its sidelong smile, and its perennial novelty, to the heart of him who knows.

Goldsmith is less eloquent but more natural than Dryden, less precise but more simple than Pope. In poetic sensibility he has the advantage of both. Were the volume of his verse not so slight, were his conceptions more sublime, and their embodiment more epic or dramatic, he might rank with the greatest of his century. As it is, in imaginative insight he has no superior in the eighteenth century; in observation, pathos, representative power, no equal: Dryden, Pope, Gray, Thomson, Young,—none but Collins approaches him. The reflective or descriptive poem can of course not compete with the drama, epic, or even lyric of corresponding merit in its respective kind. But Goldsmith's poems are the best of their kind, better than all but the best in other kinds. His conception of life is more generous and direct, hence truer and gentler, than that of the Augustan age. Raising no revolt against classical principles, he rejects the artifices of decadent classicism, returns to nature, and expresses *it* simply. He is consequently in this respect the harbinger of Cowper, Crabbe, Bloomfield, Clare, Wordsworth, and Coleridge. In technique also he breaks away from Pope. His larger movement, his easier modulation, his richer tone, his rarer epithet and epigram, his metaphor «glowing from the heart,» mark the defection from the poetry of cold conceit.

For lack of space we can only refer to the romantic quality of his ballad 'Edwin and Angelina' (1765), the spontaneous humor of 'The Haunch of Venison,' and the exquisite satire of 'Retaliation' (1774).

To appreciate the historical position of Goldsmith's comedies, one must regard them as a reaction against the school that had held the stage since the beginning of the century—a «genteel» and «sentimental» school, fearing to expose vice or ridicule absurdity. But Goldsmith felt that absurdity was the comic poet's game. Reverting therefore to Farquhar and the Comedy of Manners, he revived that species, at the same time infusing a strain of the «humors» of the tribe of Ben. Hence the approbation that welcomed his first comedy, and the applause that greeted the second. For ‘The Good-natured Man’ (1768) and ‘She Stoops to Conquer’ (1773) did by example what Hugh Kelly's ‘Piety in Pattens’ aimed to do by ridicule,—ousted the hybrid comedy (tradesman's tragedy, Voltaire called it) of which ‘The Conscious Lovers’ had been the most tolerable specimen, and ‘The School for Lovers’ the most decorous and dull.

But «Goldy» had not only the gift of weighing the times, he had the gift of the popular dramatist. His *dramatis personæ* are on the one hand nearly all legitimate descendants of the national comedy, though none is a copy from dramatic predecessors; on the other hand, they are in every instance «imitations» of real life, more than once of some aspect of his own life; but none is so close an imitation as to detract from the pleasure which fiction should afford. The former quality makes his characters look familiar; the latter, true. So he accomplishes the feat most difficult for the dramatist: while idealizing the individual in order to realize the type, he does not for a moment lose the sympathy of his audience.

Even in his earlier comedy these two characteristics are manifest. In the world of drama, young Honeywood is the legitimate descendant of Massinger's Wellborn on the one side, and of Congreve's Valentine Legend on the other, with a more distant collateral resemblance to Ben Jonson's Younger Knowell. But in the field of experience this «Good-natured Man» is that aspect of «Goldy» himself which, when he was poorest, made him not so poor but that Irishmen poorer still could live on him; that aspect of the glorious «idiot in affairs» which could make to the Earl of Northumberland, willing to be kind, no other suggestion of his wants than that he had a *brother* in Ireland, «poor, a clergyman, and much in need of help.» Similarly might those rare creations Croaker and Jack Lofty be traced to their predecessors in the field of drama, even though remote. That they had their analogies in the life of Goldsmith, and have them in the lives of others, it is unnecessary to prove. But graphic as these characters are, they cannot make of ‘The Good-natured Man’ more than a passable second to ‘She Stoops to Conquer.’ For the premises of the plot are absurd, if not impossible; the complication is not much more natural than that of a Punch-and-Judy show, and the dénouement but one shade less improbable than that of ‘The Vicar of Wakefield.’ The value of the play is principally historical, not æsthetic.

Congreve's ‘Love for Love,’ Vanbrugh's ‘Relapse,’ Farquhar's ‘Beaux' Stratagem,’ Goldsmith's ‘She Stoops to Conquer,’ and Sheridan's ‘School for Scandal,’ are the best comedies written since Jonson, Fletcher, and Massinger held the stage. In plot and diction ‘She Stoops to Conquer’ is equaled by Congreve; in character-drawing by

Vanbrugh; in dramatic ease by Farquhar, in observation and wit by Sheridan: but by none is it equaled in humor, and in naturalness of dialogue it is *facile princeps*. Here again the characterization presents the twofold charm of universality and reality. Young Marlow is the traditional lover of the type of Young Bellair, Mirabell, and Aimwell, suggesting each in turn but different from all; he is also, in his combination of embarrassment and impudence, not altogether unlike the lad Oliver who, years ago, on a journey back to school, had mistaken Squire Featherstone's house in Ardagh for an inn.

A similar adjustment of dramatic type and historic individual contributes to the durability of Tony Lumpkin. In his *dramatis persona* he is a practical joker of the family of Diccon and Truewit, and first cousin on the Blenkinsop side to that horse-flesh Sir Harry Beagle. But Anthony is more than the practical joker or the squire booby: he is a near relative of Captain O'Blunder and that whole countryside of generous, touch-and-go Irishmen; while in reality, *in propria persona*, he is that aspect of Noll Goldsmith that «lived the buckeen» in Ballymahon. Of the other characters of the play, Hardcastle, Mrs. Hardcastle, and Kate have a like prerogative of immortality. They are royally descended and personally unique.

The comedy has been absurdly called farcical. There is much less of the farcical than in many a so-called «legitimate» comedy. None of the circumstances are purely fortuitous; none unnecessary. Humor and caprice tend steadily to complicate the action, and by natural interaction prepare the way for the dénouement. The misunderstandings are the more piquant because of their manifest irony and their ephemeral character. Indeed, if any fault is to be found with the play, it is that Goldsmith did not let it resolve itself without the assistance of Sir Charles Marlow.

One peculiarity not yet mentioned is illustrative of Goldsmith's method. A system of mutual borrowing characterizes his works. The same thought, in the same or nearly the same language, occurs in half a dozen. 'The Enquiry' lends a phrase to 'The Citizen,' who passes it on to the 'Vicar,' who, thinking it too good to keep, hands it over to the 'Good-natured Man,' whence it is borrowed by 'She Stoops to Conquer,' and turned to look like new,— like a large family of sisters with a small wardrobe in common. This habit does not indicate poverty of invention in Goldsmith, but associative imagination and artistic conservatism.

Goldsmith was the only Irish story-writer and poet of his century. Four Irishmen adorned the prose of the period: Goldsmith is as eminent in the natural style as Swift in the satiric, or Steele in the polished, or Burke in the grand. In comedy the Irish led; but Steele, Macklin, Murphy, Kelly, do not compare with Farquhar, Sheridan, and

Goldsmith. The worst work of these is good, and their best is the best of the century.

Turning to Goldsmith the man, what the «draggle-tail Muses» paid him we find him spending on dress and rooms and jovial magnificence, on relatives or countrymen or the unknown poor, with such freedom that he is never relieved of the necessity of drudgery. Still, sensitive, good-natured, improvident, Irish, — and a genius, — Goldsmith lived as happy a life as his disposition would allow. He had the companionship of congenial friends, the love of men like Johnson and Reynolds, the final assurance that his art was appreciated by the public. To be sure, he was never out of debt, but that was his own fault; he was never out of credit either. «Was there ever poet so trusted?» exclaimed Johnson, after this poet had got beyond reach of his creditors. His difficulties however affected him as they affect most Irishmen,—only by cataclysms. He was serene or wretched, but generally the former: he packed *noctes cœnæque deûm* by the dozen into his life. «There is no man,» said Reynolds, «whose company is more liked.» But maybe that was because his naïveté, his brogue, his absent-mindedness, and his blunders (real or apparent) made him a ready butt for ridicule, not at the hands of Reynolds or Johnson, but of Beauclerk and the rest. For though his humor was sly, and his wit inimitable, Goldsmith's conversation was queer. It seemed to go by contraries. If permitted, he would ramble along in his hesitating, inconsequential fashion, on any subject under heaven — «too eager,» thought Johnson, «to get on without knowing how he should get off.» But if ignored, he would sit silent and apart,— sulking, thought Boswell. In fact, both the Dictator and laird of Auchinleck were of a mind that he tried too much to shine in conversation, for which he had no temper. But «Goldy's» *bons-mots* — such as the «Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur *istis*» to Johnson, as they passed under the heads on Temple Bar,— make it evident that Garrick, with his

> «Here lies Poet Goldsmith, for shortness called Noll,
> Who wrote like an angel, but talked like poor Poll,»

and most of the members of the Literary Club, did not understand their Irishman. A timidity born of rough experience may have occasionally oppressed, a sensitiveness to ridicule or indifference may have confused him, a desire for approbation may frequently have led him to speak when silence had been golden; but that his conversation was «foolish» is the judgment of Philistines who make conversation an industry, not an amusement or an art.

Boswell himself recounts more witty sayings than incomprehensible. And the «incomprehensible» are so only to Boswells and

Hawkinses, who can hardly be expected to appreciate a humor, the vein of which is a mockery of their own solemn stupidity. Probably Goldsmith did say unconsidered things; he liked to think aloud in company, to «rattle on» for diversion. Keenly alive to the riches of language, he was the more likely to feel the embarrassment of impromptu selection; and while he was too much of a genius to keep count of every pearl, he was too considerate of his fellows to cast pearls only. But most of his fellows (Reynolds excepted) appreciated neither his drollery nor his unselfishness,—had not been educated up to the type of Irishman that with an artistic love of fun, is ever ready to promote the gayety of nations by sacrificing itself in the interest of laughter. For none but an artist can, without cracking a smile, offer up his wit on the altar of his humor.

Prior describes Goldsmith as something under the middle size, sturdy, active, apparently capable of endurance; pale, forehead and upper lip rather projecting, face round, pitted with small-pox, and marked with strong lines of thinking. But Reynolds's painting idealizes and therefore best expresses the man, his twofold nature: on the one hand, self-depreciatory, generous, and improvident; on the other, aspiring, hungry for approval, laborious. Just such a man as would gild poverty with a smile, decline patronage and force his last sixpence on a street-singer, pile Pelion on Ossa for his publishers and turn out cameos for art.

Charles Mills Gayley

THE VICAR'S FAMILY BECOME AMBITIOUS

From ‹The Vicar of Wakefield›

I now began to find that all my long and painful lectures upon temperance, simplicity, and contentment were entirely disregarded. The distinctions lately paid us by our betters awakened that pride which I had laid asleep, but not removed. Our windows again, as formerly, were filled with washes for the neck and face. The sun was dreaded as an enemy to the skin without doors, and the fire as a spoiler of the complexion within. My wife observed that rising too early would hurt her daughters' eyes, that working after dinner would redden their noses, and she convinced me that the hands never looked so white as when they did nothing. Instead therefore of finishing George's shirts, we now had them new-modeling their old gauzes, or flourishing upon catgut. The poor Miss Flamboroughs, their former gay companions, were cast off as mean acquaintance, and the whole conversation ran upon high life and high-lived company, with pictures, taste, Shakespeare, and the musical glasses.

But we could have borne all this, had not a fortune-telling gypsy come to raise us into perfect sublimity. The tawny sibyl no sooner appeared than my girls came running to me for a shilling apiece, to cross her hand with silver. To say the truth, I was tired of being always wise, and could not help gratifying their request, because I loved to see them happy. I gave each of them a shilling, though for the honor of the family it must be observed that they never went without money themselves, as my wife always generously let them have a guinea each to keep in their pockets, but with strict injunctions never to change it. After they had been closeted up with the fortune-teller for some time, I knew by their looks, upon their returning, that they had been promised something great. «Well, my girls, how have you sped? Tell me, Livy, has the fortune-teller given thee a pennyworth?» «I protest, papa,» says the girl, «I believe she deals with somebody that is not right, for she positively declared that I am to be married to a squire in less than a twelvemonth!» «Well now, Sophy, my child,» said I, «and what sort of a husband are you to have?» «Sir,» replied she, «I am to have a lord soon after my sister has married the squire.» «How,» cried I, «is that all you are to have for your two shillings? Only a lord and a squire for two shillings! You fools, I could have promised you a prince and a nabob for half the money!»

This curiosity of theirs, however, was attended with very serious effects: we now began to think ourselves designed by the stars to something exalted, and already anticipated our future grandeur.

It has been a thousand times observed, and I must observe it once more, that the hours we pass with happy prospects in view are more pleasing than those crowned with fruition. In the first case we cook the dish to our own appetite; in the latter, nature cooks it for us. It is impossible to repeat the train of agreeable reveries we called up for our entertainment. We looked upon our fortunes as once more rising; and as the whole parish asserted that the Squire was in love with my daughter, she was actually so with him, for they persuaded her into the passion. In this agreeable interval my wife had the most lucky dreams in the world, which she took care to tell us every morning with great solemnity and exactness. It was one night a coffin and cross-bones, the sign of an approaching wedding; at another time she imagined her daughter's pockets filled with farthings, a certain sign of their being shortly stuffed with gold. The girls themselves had their omens. They felt strange kisses on their lips; they saw rings in the candle; purses bounced from the fire, and true-love knots lurked in the bottom of every teacup.

Towards the end of the week we received a card from the town ladies, in which, with their compliments, they hoped to see all our family at church the Sunday following. All Saturday morning I could perceive, in consequence of this, my wife and daughters in close conference together, and now and then glancing at me with looks that betrayed a latent plot. To be sincere, I had strong suspicions that some absurd proposal was preparing for appearing with splendor the next day. In the evening they began their operations in a very regular manner, and my wife undertook to conduct the siege. After tea, when I seemed in spirits, she began thus: «I fancy, Charles my dear, we shall have a great deal of good company at our church to-morrow.» «Perhaps we may, my dear,» returned I; «though you need be under no uneasiness about that; you shall have a sermon whether there be or not.» «That is what I expect,» returned she; «but I think, my dear, we ought to appear there as decently as possible, for who knows what may happen?» «Your precautions,» replied I, «are highly commendable. A decent behavior and appearance in church is what charms me. We should be devout and humble, cheerful and serene.» «Yes,» cried she, «I know that; but I mean we should go there in as proper a manner as possible; not altogether like the scrubs about us.» «You are quite right, my dear,» returned I; «and I was going to make the very same proposal. The proper manner of going is to go there as early as possible, to have time for meditation before the service begins.» «Phoo, Charles!» interrupted she; «all that is very true, but not what I would be at. I mean we should go there genteelly. You know the church is two miles off, and I protest I don't like to see my daughters trudging up to their pew all blowzed and red with walking, and looking for all the world as if they had been winners at a smock-race. Now, my dear, my proposal is this: there are our two plow-horses, the colt that has been in our family these nine years, and his companion Blackberry that has scarcely done an earthly thing this month past. They are both grown fat and lazy. Why should not they do something as well as we? And let me tell you, when Moses has trimmed them a little they will cut a very tolerable figure."

To this proposal I objected that walking would be twenty times more genteel than such a paltry conveyance, as Blackberry was wall-eyed and the colt wanted a tail; that they had never been broke to the rein, but had a hundred vicious tricks; and that we had but one saddle and pillion in the whole house. All these objections however were overruled; so that I was obliged to comply. The next morning I perceived them not a little busy in collecting such materials as might be necessary for the expedition, but as I found it would be a business of time, I walked on to the church before, and they promised speedily to follow. I waited near an hour in the reading-desk for their arrival, but not finding them come as I expected, I was obliged to begin, and went through the service, not without some uneasiness at finding them absent. This was increased when all was finished, and no appearance of the family. I therefore walked back by the horse-way, which was five miles round, though the foot-way was but two, and when I got about half-way home, perceived the procession marching slowly forward towards the church; my son, my wife, and the two little ones exalted upon one horse, and my two daughters upon the other. I demanded the cause of their delay; but I soon found by their looks they had met with a thousand misfortunes on the road. The horses had at first refused to move from the door, till Mr. Burchell was kind enough to beat them forward for about two hundred yards with his cudgel. Next, the straps of my wife's pillion broke down, and they were obliged to stop to repair them before they could proceed. After that, one of the horses took it into his head to stand still, and neither blows nor entreaties could prevail with him to proceed. They were just recovering from this dismal situation when I found them; but perceiving everything safe, I own their present mortification did not much displease me, as it would give me many opportunities of future triumph, and teach my daughters more humility.

Michaelmas Eve happening on the next day, we were invited to burn nuts and play tricks at neighbor Flamborough's. Our late mortifications had humbled us a little, or it is probable we might have rejected such an invitation with contempt; however, we suffered ourselves to be happy. Our honest neighbor's goose and dumplings were fine, and the lamb's wool, even in the opinion of my wife, who was a connoisseur, was excellent. It is true his manner of telling stories was not quite so well; they were very long and very dull, and all about himself, and we had laughed at them ten times before; however, we were kind enough to laugh at them once more.

Mr. Burchell, who was of the party, was always fond of seeing some innocent amusement going forward, and set the boys and girls to blindman's buff. My wife too was persuaded to join in the diversion, and it gave me pleasure to think she was not yet too old. In the mean time my neighbor and I looked on, laughed at every feat, and praised our own dexterity when we were young. Hot cockles succeeded next, questions and commands followed that, and last of all they sat down to hunt the slipper. As every person may not be acquainted with this primeval pastime, it may be necessary to observe that the company at this play planted themselves in a ring upon the ground, all except one, who stands in the middle, whose business it is to catch a shoe which the company shove about under their hams from one to another, something like a weaver's shuttle. As it is impossible in this case for the lady who is up to face all the company at once, the great beauty of the play lies in hitting her a thump with the heel of the shoe on that side least capable of making a defense. It was in this manner that my eldest daughter was hemmed in and thumped about, all blowzed in spirits, and bawling for fair play with a voice that might deafen a ballad-singer, when, confusion on confusion! who should enter the room but our two great acquaintances from town, Lady Blarney and Miss Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs! Description would but beggar, therefore it is unnecessary to describe this new mortification. Death! To be seen by ladies of such high breeding in such vulgar attitudes! Nothing better could ensue from such a vulgar play of Mr. Flamborough's proposing. We seemed stuck to the ground for some time, as if actually petrified with amazement.

The two ladies had been at our house to see us, and finding us from home, came after us hither, as they were uneasy to know what accident could have kept us from church the day before. Olivia undertook to be our prolocutor, and delivered the whole in the summary way, only saying, «We were thrown from our horses.» At which account the ladies were greatly concerned; but being told the family received no hurt, they were extremely glad; but being informed that we were almost killed by the fright, they were vastly sorry; but hearing that we had a very good night, they were extremely glad again. Nothing could exceed their complaisance to my daughters; their professions the last evening were warm, but now they were ardent. They protested a desire of having a more lasting acquaintance; Lady Blarney was particularly attached to Olivia; Miss Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs (I love to give the whole name) took a greater fancy to her sister. They supported the conversation between themselves, while my daughters sat silent, admiring their exalted breeding. But as every reader, however beggarly himself, is fond of high-lived dialogues, with anecdotes of lords, ladies, and Knights of the Garter, I must beg leave to give him the concluding part of the present conversation.

«All that I know of the matter,» cried Miss Skeggs, «is this: that it may be true, or it may not be true; but this I can assure your ladyship, that the whole route was in amaze; his lordship turned all manner of colors, my lady fell into a swoon, but Sir Tomkyn, drawing his sword, swore he was hers to the last drop of his blood.»

«Well,» replied our peeress, «this I can say: that the duchess never told me a syllable of the matter; and I believe her Grace would keep nothing a secret from me. This you may depend upon as fact: that the next morning my lord duke cried out three times to his *valet-de-chambre*, 'Jernigan, Jernigan, Jernigan, bring me my garters!'»

But previously I should have mentioned the very impolite behavior of Mr. Burchell, who during this discourse sat with his face turned to the fire, and at the conclusion of every sentence would cry out «*Fudge!*»—an expression which displeased us all, and in some measure damped the rising spirit of the conversation.

«Besides, my dear Skeggs,» continued our peeress, «there is nothing of this in the copy of verses that Doctor Burdock made upon the occasion.» *Fudge!*

«I am surprised at that,» cried Miss Skeggs; «for he seldom leaves anything out, as he writes only for his own amusement.

But can your Ladyship favor me with a sight of them?» *Fudge!*

«My dear creature,» replied our peeress, «do you think I carry such things about me? Though they are very fine, to be sure, and I think myself something of a judge; at least I know what pleases myself. Indeed, I was ever an admirer of all Doctor Burdock's little pieces; for except what he does, and our dear countess at Hanover Square, there's nothing comes out but the most lowest stuff in nature; not a bit of high life among them.» *Fudge!*

«Your Ladyship should except,» says t'other, «your own things in the Lady's Magazine. I hope you'll say there's nothing low-lived there? But I suppose we are to have no more from that quarter?» *Fudge!*

«Why, my dear,» says the lady, «you know my reader and companion has left me to be married to Captain Roach, and as my poor eyes won't suffer me to write myself, I have been for some time looking out for another. A proper person is no easy matter to find, and to be sure, thirty pounds a year is a small stipend for a well-bred girl of character, that can read, write, and behave in company; as for the chits about town, there is no bearing them about one.» *Fudge!*

«That I know,» cried Miss Skeggs, «by experience. For of the three companions I had this last half-year, one of them refused to do plain work an hour in the day, another thought twenty-five guineas a year too small a salary, and I was obliged to send away the third because I suspected an intrigue with the chaplain. Virtue, my dear Lady Blarney, virtue is worth any price; but where is that to be found?» *Fudge!*

My wife had been for a long time all attention to this discourse, but was particularly struck with the latter part of it. Thirty pounds and twenty-five guineas a year made fifty-six pounds five shillings, English money, all which was in a manner going a-begging, and might easily be secured in the family. She for a moment studied my looks for approbation; and to own a truth, I was of opinion that two such places would fit our two daughters exactly. Besides, if the Squire had any real affection for my eldest daughter, this would be the way to make her every way qualified for her fortune. My wife therefore was resolved that we should not be deprived of such advantages for want of assurance, and undertook to harangue for the family. «I hope,» cried she, « your ladyships will pardon my present presumption. It is true, we have no right to pretend to such favors; but yet it is natural for me to wish putting my children forward in the world. And I will be bold to say my two girls have had a pretty good education and capacity; at least, the country can't show better. They can read, write, and cast accounts; they understand their needle, broad-stitch, cross-and-change, and all manner of plain work; they can pink, point, and frill, and know something of music; they can do up small-clothes, work upon catgut; my eldest can cut paper, and my youngest has a very pretty manner of telling fortunes upon the cards.» *Fudge!*

When she had delivered this pretty piece of eloquence, the two ladies looked at each other a few moments in silence, with an air of doubt and importance. At last Miss Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs condescended to observe that the young ladies, from the opinion she could form of them from so slight an acquaintance, seemed very fit for such employments. « But a thing of this kind, madam,» cried she, addressing my spouse, « requires a thorough examination into characters, and a more perfect knowledge of each other. Not, madam,» continued she, « that I in the least suspect the young ladies' virtue, prudence, and discretion; but there is a form in these things, madam, there is a form.»

My wife approved her suspicions very much, observing that she was very apt to be suspicious herself; but referred her to all the neighbors for a character; but this our peeress declined as unnecessary, alleging that her cousin Thornhill's recommendation would be sufficient, and upon this we rested our petition.

When we returned home, the night was dedicated to schemes of future conquest. Deborah exerted much sagacity in conjecturing which of the two girls was likely to have the best place, and most opportunities of seeing good company. The only obstacle to our preferment was in obtaining the Squire's recommendation; but he had already shown us too many instances of his friendship to doubt of it now. Even in bed my wife kept up the usual theme: « Well, faith, my dear Charles, between ourselves, I think we have made an excellent day's work of it.» « Pretty well,» cried I, not knowing what to say. « What, only pretty well!» returned she; « I think it is very well. Suppose the girls should come to make acquaintances of taste in town! This I am assured of, that London is the only place in the world for all manner of husbands. Besides, my dear, stranger things happen every day; and as ladies of quality are so taken with my daughters, what will not men of quality be! *Entre nous*, I protest I like my Lady Blarney vastly; so very obliging. However, Miss Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs has my warm heart. But yet when they came to talk of places in town, you saw at once how I nailed them. Tell me, my dear, don't you think I did for my children there?" "Ay," returned I, not knowing well what to think of the matter; "Heaven grant that they may be both the better for it this day three months!" This was one of those observations I usually made to impress my wife with an opinion of my sagacity; for if the girls succeeded, then it was a pious wish fulfilled; but if anything unfortunate ensued, then it might be looked upon as a prophecy.

NEW MISFORTUNES: BUT OFFENSES ARE EASILY PARDONED WHERE THERE IS LOVE AT BOTTOM

From 'The Vicar of Wakefield'

THE next morning I took my daughter behind me, and set out on my return home. As we traveled along, I strove by every persuasion to calm her sorrows and fears, and to arm her with resolution to bear the presence of her offended mother. I took every opportunity, from the prospect of a fine country through which we passed, to observe how much kinder Heaven was to us than we were to each other, and that the misfortunes of nature's making were very few. I assured her that she should never perceive any change in my affections, and that during my life, which yet might be long, she might depend upon a guardian and an instructor. I armed her against the censures of the world; showed her that books were sweet, unreproaching companions to the miserable, and that if they could not bring us to enjoy life, they would at least teach us to endure it.

The hired horse that we rode was to be put up that night at an inn by the way, within about five miles from my house; and as I was willing to prepare my family for my daughter's reception, I determined to leave her that night at the inn, and to return for her accompanied by my daughter Sophia, early the next morning. It was night before we reached our appointed stage; however, after seeing her provided with a decent apartment, and having ordered the hostess to prepare proper refreshments, I kissed her, and proceeded towards home. And now my heart caught new sensations of pleasure, the nearer I approached that peaceful mansion. As a bird that had been frighted from its nest, my affections outwent my haste, and hovered round my little fireside with all the rapture of expectation. I called up the many fond things I had to say, and anticipated the welcome I was to receive. I already felt my wife's tender embrace, and smiled at the joy of my little ones. As I walked but slowly, the night waned apace. The laborers of the day were all retired to rest; the lights were out in every cottage; no sounds were heard but of the shrilling cock, and the deep-mouthed watch-dog at the hollow distance. I approached my little abode of pleasure, and before I was within a furlong of the place our honest mastiff came running to welcome me.

It was now near midnight that I came to knock at my door; all was still and silent; my heart dilated with unutterable happiness; when to my amazement I saw the house bursting out in a blaze of fire, and every aperture red with conflagration! I gave a loud convulsive outcry, and fell upon the pavement insensible. This alarmed my son, who had till this been asleep, and he perceiving the flames instantly waked my wife and daughter, and all running out naked and wild with apprehension, recalled me to life with their anguish. But it was only to objects of new terror; for the flames had by this time caught the roof of our dwelling, part after part continuing to fall in, while the family stood with silent agony looking on, as if they enjoyed the blaze. I gazed upon them and upon it by turns, and then looked round me for my two little ones: but they were not to be seen. Oh misery! «Where,» cried I, «where are my little ones?» «They are burnt to death in the flames,» said my wife calmly, «and I will die with them.» That moment I heard the cry of the babes within, who were just awaked by the fire; and nothing could have stopped me. «Where, where are my children?» cried I, rushing through the flames, and bursting the door of the chamber in which they were confined; «where are my little ones?» «Here, dear papa, here we are,» cried they together, while the flames were just catching the bed where they lay. I caught them both in my arms, and snatched them through the fire as fast as possible, while just as I was got out, the roof sunk in. «Now,» cried I, holding up my children, «now let the flames burn on, and all my possessions perish. Here they are; I have saved my treasure. Here, my dearest, here are our treasures, and we shall yet be happy.» We kissed our little darlings a thousand times, they clasped us round the neck and seemed to share our transports, while their mother laughed and wept by turns.

I now stood a calm spectator of the flames, and after some time began to perceive that my arm to the shoulder was scorched in a terrible manner. It was therefore out of my power to give my son any assistance, either in attempting to save our goods, or preventing the flames spreading to our corn. By this time the neighbors were alarmed, and came running to our assistance; but all they could do was to stand, like us, spectators of the calamity. My goods, among which were the notes I had reserved for my daughters' fortunes, were entirely consumed, except a box with some papers that stood in the kitchen, and two or three things more of little consequence which my son brought away in the beginning. The neighbors contributed, however, what they could to lighten our distress. They brought us clothes, and furnished one of our out-houses with kitchen utensils; so that by daylight we had another, though a wretched dwelling, to retire to. My honest next neighbor and his children were not the least assiduous in providing us with everything necessary, and offering whatever consolation untutored benevolence could suggest.

When the fears of my family had subsided, curiosity to know the cause of my long stay began to take place; having therefore informed them of every particular, I proceeded to prepare them for the reception of our lost one, and though we had nothing but wretchedness now to impart, I was willing to procure her a welcome to what we had. This task would have been more difficult but for our recent calamity, which had humbled my wife's pride and blunted it by more poignant afflictions. Being unable to go for my poor child myself, as my arm grew very painful, I sent my son and daughter, who soon returned, supporting the wretched delinquent, who had not the courage to look up at her mother, whom no instructions of mine could persuade to a perfect reconciliation; for women have a much stronger sense of female error than men. «Ah, madam,» cried her mother, «this is but a poor place you have come to after so much finery. My daughter Sophy and I can afford but little entertainment to persons who have kept company only with people of distinction. Yes, Miss Livy, your poor father and I have suffered very much of late; but I hope Heaven will forgive you.» During this reception the unhappy victim stood pale and trembling, unable to weep or to reply; but I could not continue a silent spectator of her distress; wherefore, assuming a degree of severity in my voice and manner which was ever followed with instant submission:—«I entreat, woman, that my words may be now marked once for all: I have here brought you back a poor deluded wanderer; her return to duty demands the revival of our tenderness. The real hardships of life are now coming fast upon us; let us not therefore increase them by dissension among each other. If we live harmoniously together, we may yet be contented, as there are enough of us to shut out the censuring world and keep each other in countenance. The kindness of Heaven is promised to the penitent, and let ours be directed by the example. Heaven, we are assured, is much more pleased to view a repentant sinner than ninety-nine persons who have supported a course of undeviating rectitude. And this is right; for that single effort by which we stop short in the down-hill path to perdition, is itself a greater exertion of virtue than a hundred acts of justice.»

Some assiduity was now required to make our present abode as convenient as possible, and we were soon again qualified to enjoy our former serenity. Being disabled myself from assisting my son in our usual occupations, I read to my family from the few books that were saved, and particularly from such as by amusing the imagination contributed to ease the heart. Our good neighbors, too, came every day with the kindest condolence, and fixed a time in which they were all to assist at repairing my former dwelling. Honest Farmer Williams was not last among these visitors, but heartily offered his friendship. He would even have renewed his addresses to my daughter; but she rejected them in such a manner as totally repressed his future solicitations. Her grief seemed formed for continuing, and she was the only person of our little society that a week did not restore to cheerfulness. She had now lost that unblushing innocence which once taught her to respect herself, and to seek pleasure by pleasing. Anxiety now had taken strong possession of her mind, her beauty began to be impaired with her constitution, and neglect still more contributed to diminish it. Every tender epithet bestowed on her sister brought a pang to her heart and a tear to her eye; and as one vice, though cured, ever plants others where it has been, so her former guilt, though driven out by repentance, left jealousy and envy behind. I strove in a thousand ways to lessen her care, and even forgot my own pain in a concern for hers, collecting such amusing passages of history as a strong memory and some reading could suggest. «Our happiness, my dear,» I would say, «is in the power of One who can bring it about a thousand unforeseen ways that mock our foresight.»

In this manner I would attempt to amuse my daughter; but she listened with divided attention, for her own misfortunes engrossed all the pity she once had for those of another, and nothing gave her ease. In company she dreaded contempt, and in solitude she only found anxiety. Such was the color of her wretchedness, when we received certain information that Mr. Thornhill was going to be married to Miss Wilmot, for whom I always suspected he had a real passion, though he took every opportunity before me to express his contempt both of her person and fortune. This news only served to increase poor Olivia's affliction; such a flagrant breach of fidelity was more than her courage could support. I was resolved however to get more certain information, and to defeat if possible the completion of his designs, by sending my son to old Mr. Wilmot's with instructions to know the truth of the report, and to deliver Miss Wilmot a letter intimating Mr. Thornhill's conduct in my family. My son went in pursuance of my directions, and in three days returned, assuring us of the truth of the account; but that he had found it impossible to deliver the letter, which he was therefore obliged to leave, as Mr. Thornhill and Miss Wilmot were visiting round the country. They were to be married, he said, in a few days, having appeared together at church the Sunday before he was there, in great splendor; the bride attended by six young ladies, and he by as many gentlemen. Their approaching nuptials filled the whole country with rejoicing, and they usually rode out together in the grandest equipage that had been seen in the country for years. All the friends of both families, he said, were there, particularly the Squire's uncle, Sir William Thornhill, who bore so good a character. He added that nothing but mirth and feasting were going forward; that all the country praised the young bride's beauty and the bridegroom's fine person, and that they were immensely fond of each other; concluding that he could not help thinking Mr. Thornhill one of the most happy men in the world.

"Why, let him if he can," returned I; "but my son, observe this bed of straw and unsheltering roof, those moldering walls and humid floor, my wretched body thus disabled by fire, and my children weeping round me for bread. You have come home, my child, to all this; yet here, even here, you see a man that would not for a thousand worlds exchange situations. O my children, if you could but learn to commune with your own hearts, and know what noble company you can make them, you would little regard the elegance and splendor of the worthless. Almost all men have been taught to call life a passage, and themselves the travelers. The similitude still may be improved, when we observe that the good are joyful and serene, like travelers that are going towards home; the wicked but by intervals happy, like travelers that are going into exile."

My compassion for my poor daughter, overpowered by this new disaster, interrupted what I had further to observe. I bade her mother support her, and after a short time she recovered. She appeared from that time more calm, and I imagined had gained a new degree of resolution; but appearances deceived me, for her tranquillity was the languor of overwrought resentment. A supply of provisions charitably sent us by my kind parishioners seemed to diffuse new cheerfulness among the rest of the family; nor was I displeased at seeing them once more sprightly and at ease. It would have been unjust to damp their satisfactions merely to condole with resolute melancholy, or to burden them with a sadness they did not feel. Thus once more the tale went round, and the song was demanded, and cheerfulness condescended to hover round our little habitation.

The next morning the sun arose with peculiar warmth for the season; so that we agreed to breakfast together on the honeysuckle bank; where, while we sat, my youngest daughter, at my request, joined her voice to the concert on the trees about us. It was in this place my poor Olivia first met her seducer, and every object served to recall her sadness. But that melancholy which is excited by objects of pleasure, or inspired by sounds of harmony, soothes the heart instead of corroding it. Her mother, too, upon this occasion felt a pleasing distress, and wept, and loved her daughter as before. «Do, my pretty Olivia,» cried she, «let us have that little melancholy air your papa was so fond of; your sister Sophy has already obliged us. Do, child; it will please your old father.» She complied in a manner so exquisitely pathetic as moved me:

«When lovely woman stoops to folly,
   And finds too late that men betray,
What charm can soothe her melancholy?
   What art can wash her guilt away?

«The only art her guilt to cover,
   To hide her shame from every eye,
To give repentance to her lover,
   And wring his bosom, is—to die.»

As she was concluding the last stanza, to which an interruption in her voice from sorrow gave peculiar softness, the appearance of Mr. Thornhill's equipage at a distance alarmed us all, but particularly increased the uneasiness of my eldest daughter, who, desirous of shunning her betrayer, returned to the house with her sister. In a few minutes he was alighted from his chariot, and making up to the place where I was still sitting, inquired after my health with his usual air of familiarity. «Sir,» replied I, «your present assurance only serves to aggravate the baseness of your character; and there was a time when I would have chastised your insolence for presuming thus to appear before me. But now you are safe; for age has cooled my passions, and my calling restrains me.»

«I vow, my dear sir,» returned he, «I am amazed at all this, nor can I understand what it means. I hope you don't think your daughter's late excursion with me had anything criminal in it.»

«Go,» cried I; «thou art a wretch, a poor pitiful wretch, and every way a liar; but your meanness secures you from my anger. Yet, sir, I am descended from a family that would not have borne this! And so, thou vile thing! to gratify a momentary passion, thou hast made one poor creature wretched for life, and polluted a family that had nothing but honor for their portion.»

«If she or you,» returned he, «are resolved to be miserable, I cannot help it. But you may still be happy; and whatever opinion you may have formed of me, you shall ever find me ready to contribute to it. We can marry her to another in a short time, and what is more, she may keep her lover beside; for I protest I shall ever continue to have a true regard for her.»

I found all my passions alarmed at this new degrading proposal; for although the mind may often be calm under great injuries, little villainy can at any time get within the soul and sting it into rage. «Avoid my sight, thou reptile,» cried I, «nor continue to insult me with thy presence. Were my brave son at home he would not suffer this; but I am old and disabled, and every way undone.»

«I find,» cried he, «you are bent upon obliging me to talk in a harsher manner than I intended. But as I have shown you what may be hoped from my friendship, it may not be improper to represent what may be the consequences of my resentment. My attorney, to whom your late bond has been transferred, threatens hard; nor do I know how to prevent the course of justice except by paying the money myself, which, as I have been at some expenses lately previous to my intended marriage, is not so easy to be done. And then my steward talks of driving for the rent: it is certain he knows his duty, for I never trouble myself with affairs of that nature. Yet still I could wish to serve you, and even to have you and your daughter present at my marriage, which is shortly to be solemnized with Miss Wilmot; it is even the request of my charming Arabella herself, whom I hope you will not refuse.»

«Mr. Thornhill,» replied I, «hear me once for all: as to your marriage with any but my daughter, that I never will consent to; and though your friendship could raise me to a throne, or your resentment sink me to the grave, yet would I despise both. Thou hast once woefully, irreparably deceived me. I reposed my heart upon thine honor, and have found its baseness. Never more, therefore, expect friendship from me. Go, and possess what fortune has given thee — beauty, riches, health, and pleasure. Go and leave me to want, infamy, disease, and sorrow. Yet humbled as I am, shall my heart still vindicate its dignity, and though thou hast my forgiveness, thou shalt ever have my contempt.»

«If so,» returned he, «depend upon it you shall feel the effects of this insolence; and we shall shortly see which is the fittest object of scorn, you or me.» Upon which he departed abruptly.

PICTURES FROM ‹THE DESERTED VILLAGE›

Sweet Auburn! parent of the blissful hour,
Thy glades forlorn confess the tyrant's power.
Here, as I take my solitary rounds
Amidst thy tangling walks and ruined grounds,
And, many a year elapsed, return to view
Where once the cottage stood, the hawthorn grew,
Remembrance wakes, with all her busy train,
Swells at my breast, and turns the past to pain.
In all my wanderings round this world of care,
In all my griefs,—and God has given my share,—
I still had hopes, my latest hours to crown,
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down;
To husband out life's taper at the close,
And keep the flame from wasting by repose.
I still had hopes—for pride attends us still—
Amidst the swains to show my book-learned skill;
Around my fire an evening group to draw,
And tell of all I felt, and all I saw;
And as a hare whom hounds and horns pursue
Pants to the place from whence at first she flew,
I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
Here to return—and die at home at last.

Oh, blest retirement! friend to life's decline,
Retreat from care, that never must be mine,
How blest is he who crowns in shades like these
A youth of labor with an age of ease;
Who quits a world where strong temptations try,
And since 'tis hard to combat, learns to fly!
For him no wretches, born to work and weep,
Explore the mine, or tempt the dangerous deep;
No surly porter stands in guilty state,
To spurn imploring famine from the gate:
But on he moves to meet his latter end,
Angels around befriending virtue's friend;
Bends to the grave with unperceived decay,
While resignation gently slopes the way;
And, all his prospects brightening to the last,
His heaven commences ere the world be past.

Sweet was the sound, when oft at evening's close
Up yonder hill the village murmur rose.

There, as I passed with careless steps and slow,
The mingling notes came softened from below:
The swain responsive as the milkmaid sung,
The sober herd that lowed to meet their young;
The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool;
The playful children just let loose from school;
The watch-dog's voice that bayed the whispering wind,
And the loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind:
These all in sweet confusion sought the shade,
And filled each pause the nightingale had made.
But now the sounds of population fail;
No cheerful murmurs fluctuate in the gale;
No busy steps the grass-grown footway tread,
But all the bloomy flush of life is fled.
All but yon widowed, solitary thing
That feebly bends beside the plashy spring;
She, wretched matron,—forced in age, for bread,
To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread,
To pick her wintry fagot from the thorn,
To seek her nightly shed, and weep till morn,—
She only left of all the harmless train,
The sad historian of the pensive plain.

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,
And still where many a garden flower grows wild,
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
The village preacher's modest mansion rose.
A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a year.
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change, his place:
Unpracticed he to fawn, or seek for power,
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour;
Far other aims his heart had learned to prize,
More skilled to raise the wretched than to rise.
His house was known to all the vagrant train,—
He chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain;
The long-remembered beggar was his guest,
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast;
The ruined spendthrift, now no longer proud,
Claimed kindred there, and had his claims allowed;
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sate by his fire, and talked the night away,
Wept o'er his wounds, or, tales of sorrow done,
Shouldered his crutch, and showed how fields were won.

Pleased with his guests, the good man learned to glow,
And quite forgot their vices in their woe;
Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began.

Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
And e'en his failings leaned to virtue's side:
But in his duty prompt at every call,
He watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all.
And as a bird each fond endearment tries
To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.

Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain, by turns dismayed,
The reverend champion stood. At his control,
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul;
Comfort came down, the trembling wretch to raise,
And his last faltering accents whispered praise.

At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorned the venerable place;
Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway,
And fools who came to scoff remained to pray.
The service past, around the pious man,
With steady zeal, each honest rustic ran;
Even children followed, with endearing wile,
And plucked his gown, to share the good man's smile.
His ready smile a parent's warmth exprest;
Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distrest;
To them his heart, his love, his griefs, were given,
But all his serious thoughts had rest in Heaven:
As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way,
With blossomed furze unprofitably gay,
There in his noisy mansion, skilled to rule,
The village master taught his little school.
A man severe he was, and stern to view;
I knew him well, and every truant knew:

Well had the boding tremblers learned to trace
The day's disasters in his morning face;
Full well they laughed, with counterfeited glee,
At all his jokes,— for many a joke had he;
Full well the busy whisper, circling round,
Conveyed the dismal tidings when he frowned.
Yet he was kind; or if severe in aught,
The love he bore to learning was in fault.
The village all declared how much he knew:
'Twas certain he could write, and cipher too;
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,
And even the story ran that he could *gauge*.
In arguing, too, the parson owned his skill,
For even though vanquished he could argue still;
While words of learnèd length and thundering sound,
Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around,
And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew
That one small head could carry all he knew.
But past is all his fame. The very spot
Where many a time he triumphed is forgot.

Near yonder thorn, that lifts its head on high,
Where once the sign-post caught the passing eye,
Low lies that house where nut-brown draughts inspired,
Where graybeard mirth and smiling toil retired,
Where village statesmen talked with looks profound,
And news much older than their ale went round.
Imagination fondly stoops to trace
The parlor splendors of that festive place:
The whitewashed wall, the nicely sanded floor,
The varnished clock that clicked behind the door;
The chest contrived a double debt to pay,
A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day;
The pictures placed for ornament and use,
The twelve good rules, the royal game of goose;
The hearth, except when winter chilled the day,
With aspen boughs and flowers and fennel gay,
While broken teacups, wisely kept for show,
Ranged o'er the chimney, glistened in a row.

Vain, transitory splendors! could not all
Reprieve the tottering mansion from its fall?
Obscure it sinks, nor shall it more impart
An hour's importance to the poor man's heart.

Thither no more the peasant shall repair
To sweet oblivion of his daily care;
No more the farmer's news, the barber's tale,
No more the woodman's ballad shall prevail;
No more the smith his dusky brow shall clear,
Relax his ponderous strength, and lean to hear;
The host himself no longer shall be found
Careful to see the mantling bliss go round;
Nor the coy maid, half willing to be prest,
Shall kiss the cup to pass it to the rest.

Yes! let the rich deride, the proud disdain
These simple blessings of the lowly train;
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art.
Spontaneous joys where nature has its play,
The soul adopts, and owns their first-born sway;
Lightly they frolic o'er the vacant mind,
Unenvied, unmolested, unconfined.
But the long pomp, the midnight masquerade,
With all the freaks of wanton wealth arrayed,—
In these, ere triflers half their wish obtain,
The toiling pleasure sickens into pain;
And even while fashion's brightest arts decoy,
The heart, distrusting, asks if this be joy.

CONTRASTED NATIONAL TYPES

From 'The Traveller'

My soul, turn from them; turn we to survey
Where rougher climes a nobler race display;
Where the bleak Swiss their stormy mansion tread,
And force a churlish soil for scanty bread.
No product here the barren hills afford,
But man and steel, the soldier and his sword;
No vernal blooms their torpid rocks array,
But winter lingering chills the lap of May;
No zephyr fondly sues the mountain's breast,
But meteors glare, and stormy glooms invest.

Yet still, even here, content can spread a charm,
Redress the clime, and all its rage disarm.
Though poor the peasant's hut, his feasts though small
He sees his little lot the lot of all;

Sees no contiguous palace rear its head
To shame the meanness of his humble shed;
No costly lord the sumptuous banquet deal
To make him loathe his vegetable meal;
But calm, and bred in ignorance and toil,
Each wish contracting fits him to the soil.
Cheerful at morn he wakes from short repose,
Breasts the keen air, and carols as he goes;
With patient angle trolls the finny deep,
Or drives his venturous plowshare to the steep;
Or seeks the den where snow-tracks mark the way,
And drags the struggling savage into day.
At night returning, every labor sped,
He sits him down, the monarch of a shed;
Smiles by his cheerful fire, and round surveys
His children's looks, that brighten at the blaze;
While his loved partner, boastful of her hoard,
Displays her cleanly platter on the board;
And haply too some pilgrim, thither led,
With many a tale repays the nightly bed.

Thus every good his native wilds impart,
Imprints the patriot passion on his heart;
And even those ills that round his mansion rise,
Enhance the bliss his scanty fund supplies.
Dear is that shed to which his soul conforms,
And dear that hill which lifts him to the storms;
And as a child, when scaring sounds molest,
Clings close and closer to the mother's breast,
So the loud torrent, and the whirlwind's roar,
But bind him to his native mountains more.

Such are the charms to barren states assigned;
Their wants but few, their wishes all confined.
Yet let them only share the praises due,—
If few their wants, their pleasures are but few;
For every want that stimulates the breast
Becomes a source of pleasure when redrest.
Whence from such lands each pleasing science flies
That first excites desire, and then supplies;
Unknown to them, when sensual pleasures cloy,
To fill the languid pause with finer joy;
Unknown those powers that raise the soul to flame,
Catch every nerve, and vibrate through the frame.

Their level life is but a smoldering fire,
Unquenched by want, unfanned by strong desire;
Unfit for raptures, or if raptures cheer
On some high festival of once a year,
In wild excess the vulgar breast takes fire,
Till, buried in debauch, the bliss expire.

But not their joys alone thus coarsely flow:
Their morals, like their pleasures, are but low;
For as refinement stops, from sire to son
Unaltered, unimproved, the manners run;
And love's and friendship's finely pointed dart
Falls blunted from each indurated heart.
Some sterner virtues o'er the mountain's breast
May sit, like falcons cowering on the nest;
But all the gentler morals, such as play
Through life's more cultured walks, and charm the way,
These, far dispersed, on timorous pinions fly,
To sport and flutter in a kinder sky.

To kinder skies, where gentler manners reign,
I turn; and France displays her bright domain.
Gay, sprightly land of mirth and social ease,
Pleased with thyself, whom all the world can please,
How often have I led thy sportive choir,
With tuneless pipe, beside the murmuring Loire!
Where shading elms along the margin grew,
And freshened from the wave the zephyr flew;
And haply, though my harsh touch, faltering still,
But mocked all tune, and marred the dancer's skill,
Yet would the village praise my wondrous power,
And dance, forgetful of the noontide hour.
Alike all ages: dames of ancient days
Have led their children through the mirthful maze;
And the gay grandsire, skilled in gestic lore,
Has frisked beneath the burthen of threescore.

So blest a life these thoughtless realms display,
Thus idly busy rolls their world away:
Theirs are those arts that mind to mind endear,
For honor forms the social temper here.
Honor, that praise which real merit gains,
Or even imaginary worth obtains,
Here passes current; paid from hand to hand,
It shifts in splendid traffic round the land;

From courts to camps, to cottages it strays,
And all are taught an avarice of praise:
They please, are pleased, they give to get esteem,
Till, seeming blest, they grow to what they seem.

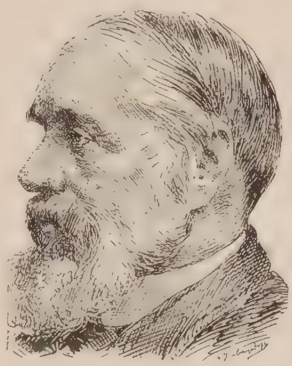
But while this softer art their bliss supplies,
It gives their follies also room to rise:
For praise too dearly loved, or warmly sought,
Enfeebles all internal strength of thought;
And the weak soul, within itself unblest,
Leans for all pleasure on another's breast.
Hence ostentation here, with tawdry art,
Pants for the vulgar praise which fools impart;
Here vanity assumes her pert grimace,
And trims her robes of frieze with copper lace;
Here beggar pride defrauds her daily cheer,
To boast one splendid banquet once a year:
The mind still turns where shifting fashion draws,
Nor weighs the solid worth of self-applause.

IVÁN ALEKSANDROVITCH GONCHARÓF

(1812–)

BY NATHAN HASKELL DOLE

Among the Russian novelists of the first rank stands Iván the son of Alexander Goncharóf. His life has been almost synchronous with the century. He was born in 1812 in the city of Simbirsk, on the Volga below Nízhni Nóvgorod. His father, a wealthy merchant of that flourishing town, died when the boy was only three years old, leaving him in the care of his mother, a conscientious and lovely woman, who, without a remarkable education, nevertheless determined that her son should have the best that could be provided. In this she was cordially assisted by Iván's godfather, a retired naval officer who lived in one of her houses and was a cultivated, lively, and lovable man, the centre of the best society of the provincial city. His tales of travel and adventure early implanted in the boy a great passion for reading and study about foreign lands, and the desire to see the world.


I. V. Goncharóf

He was at first taught at home; then he was sent to a private school which had been established by a local priest for the benefit of neighboring land-owners and gentry. This priest had been educated at the Theological School at Kazán, and was distinguished for his courtly manners and general cultivation. His wife — for it must be remembered that the Russian priesthood is not celibate — was a fascinating French woman, and she taught her native tongue in her husband's school. This remarkable little institution had a small but select library, and here young Goncharóf indulged his taste in reading by devouring the Voyages of Captain Cook, Mungo Park, and others, the histories of Karamzin and Rollin, the poetical works of Tasso and Fénelon, as well as the romantic fiction of that day; he was especially fascinated by 'The Heir of Redclyffe.' His reading, however, was ill regulated and not well adapted for his mental discipline. At twelve he was taken by his mother to Moscow, where he had the opportunity to study English and German as well as to continue his reading in French, in which he had already been well grounded.

In 1831 he entered Moscow University, electing the Philological Faculty. There were at that time in the University a coterie of young men who afterwards became famous as writers, and the lectures delivered by a number of enthusiastic young professors were admirably calculated to develop the best in those who heard them. He finished the complete course, and after a brief visit at his native place went to St. Petersburg, where he entered the Ministry of Finance. Gogol, and Goncharóf himself, have painted the depressing influence of the officialdom then existing. The *chinóvnik* as painted by those early realists was a distinct type. But on the other hand, there was a delightful society at St. Petersburg, and the literary impulses of talented young men were fostered by its leaders. Some of these men founded a new journal of which Salonitsuin was the leading spirit, and in this appeared Goncharóf's first articles. They were of a humoristic tendency. His first serious work was entitled ‹Obuiknavénnaya Istóriya› (An Ordinary Story),—a rather melancholy tale, showing how youthful enthusiasm and the dreams of progress and perfection can be killed by formalism: Aleksandr Adúyef the romantic dreamer is contrasted with his practical uncle Peter Ivánovitch. The second part was not completed when the first part was placed in the hands of the critic Byelínsky, the sovereign arbiter on things literary. Byelínsky gave it his «imprimatur,» and it was published in the Sovreménnik (Contemporary) in 1847. The conception of his second and by all odds his best romance, ‹Oblómof,› was already in his mind; and the first draft was published in the Illustrated Album, under the title ‹Son Oblómova› (Oblómof's Dream), the following year.

In 1852 Goncharóf received from the Marine Ministry a proposition to sail around the world as private secretary to Admiral Putyátin. On his return he contributed to various magazines sketches of his experiences, and finally published a handsome volume of his travels entitled ‹Phregat Pállada› (The Frigate Pallas). In 1857 he went to Carlsbad and completed ‹Oblómof,› on which he had been working so many years. It appeared in Otetchestvenniya Zapíski (Annals of the Fatherland) in 1858 and 1859, and made a profound sensation. The hero was recognized as a perfectly elaborated portrait of a not uncommon type of Russian character: a good-natured, warm-hearted, healthy young man, so enervated by the atmosphere of indolence into which he has allowed himself to sink, that nothing serves to rouse him. Love is the only impulse which could galvanize him into life. Across his path comes the beautiful Olga, whom the Russians claim as a poetic and at the same time a genuine representative of the best Russian womanhood. Vigorous, alert, with mind and heart equally well developed, she stirs the latent manhood of Oblómof; but when he comes to face the responsibilities, the cares, and the duties of matrimony, he has not the courage to enter upon them. Olga marries Oblómof's friend Stoltz, whom Goncharóf intended to be a no less typical specimen of Russian manhood, and whom most critics consider overdrawn and not true to life. The novel is a series of wonderful *genre* pictures: his portraits are marvels of finish and delicacy; and there are a number of dramatic scenes, although the story as a whole lacks movement. The first chapter, which is here reproduced, is chosen not as perhaps the finest in the book, but as thoroughly characteristic. It is also a fine specimen of Russian humor.

Goncharóf finished in 1868 his third novel, entitled ‘Abruíf’ (The Precipice). It was published first in the Viéstnik Yevrópui (European Messenger), and in book form in 1870. In this he tries to portray the type of the Russian Nihilist; but Volokhóf is regarded rather as a caricature than as a faithful portrait. In contrast with him stands the beautiful Viera; but just as Volokhóf falls below Oblómof, so Viera yields to Olga in perfect realism. One of the best characters in the story is the dilettante Raïsky, the type of the man who has an artistic nature but no energy. One of the most important characters of the book is Viera's grandmother: the German translation of ‘The Precipice’ is entitled ‘The Grandmother's Fault.’

Goncharóf has written a few literary essays, and during the past few years has contributed to one of the Russian reviews a series of literary recollections. But his fame with posterity will depend principally on his ‘Oblómof,’ the name of which has given to the language a new word,—*oblómovshchina*,* Oblómovism,—the typically Russian indolence which was induced by the peculiar social conditions existing in Russia before the emancipation of the serfs in 1861: indifference to all social questions; the expectation that others will do your work; or as expressed in the Russian proverb, “the trusting in others as in God, but in yourself as in the Devil.”

N. H. Dole

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* Oblómof is the genitive plural of the word oblóm or oblám, a term expressive of anything broken or almost useless, or even bad; a rude, awkward, unfinished man.

OBLÓMOF

In Garókhavaya Street, in one of those immense houses the population of which would suffice for a whole provincial city, there lay one morning in bed in his apartment Ílya Ílyitch Oblómof. He was a pleasant-appearing man of two or three and twenty, of medium stature, with dark gray eyes; but his face lacked any fixed idea or concentration of purpose. A thought would wander like a free bird over his features, flutter in his eyes, light on his parted lips, hide itself in the wrinkles of his brow, then entirely vanish away; and over his whole countenance would spread the shadeless light of unconcern.

From his face this indifference extended to the attitudes of his whole body, even to the folds of his dressing-gown. Occasionally his eyes were darkened by an expression of weariness or disgust, but neither weariness nor disgust could for an instant dispel from his face the indolence which was the dominant and habitual expression not only of his body, but also of his very soul. And his soul was frankly and clearly betrayed in his eyes, in his smile, in every movement of his head, of his hands.

A cool superficial observer, glancing at Oblómof as he passed him by, would have said, «He must be a good-natured, simple-hearted fellow.» Any one looking deeper, more sympathetically, would after a few moments' scrutiny turn away with a smile, with a feeling of agreeable uncertainty.

Oblómof's complexion was not florid, not tawny, and not positively pallid, but was indeterminate,—or seemed to be so, perhaps because it was flabby; not by reason of age, but by lack of exercise or of fresh air or of both. His body, to judge by the dull, transparent color of his neck, by his little plump hands, his drooping shoulders, seemed too effeminate for a man. His movements, even if by chance he were aroused, were kept under restraint likewise by a languor and by a laziness that was not devoid of its own peculiar grace.

If a shadow of an anxious thought arose from his spirit and passed across his face, his eyes would grow troubled, the wrinkles in his brow would deepen, a struggle of doubt or pain would seem to begin: but rarely indeed would this troubled thought crystallize into the form of a definite idea; still more rarely would it be transformed into a project.

All anxiety would be dissipated in a sigh and settle down into apathy or languid dreaming.

How admirably Oblómof's house costume suited his unruffled features and his effeminate body! He wore a dressing-gown of Persian material — a regular Oriental *khalát*, without the slightest suggestion of anything European about it, having no tassels, no velvet, no special shape. It was ample in size, so that he might have wrapped it twice around him. The sleeves, in the invariable Asiatic style, grew wider and wider from the wrist to the shoulder. Although this garment had lost its first freshness, and in places had exchanged its former natural gloss for another that was acquired, it still preserved the brilliancy of its Oriental coloring and its firmness of texture.

The khalát had in Oblómof's eyes a multitude of precious properties: it was soft and supple; the body was not sensible of its weight; like an obedient slave, it accommodated itself to every slightest motion.

Oblómof while at home always went without cravat and without waistcoat, for the simple reason that he liked simplicity and comfort. The slippers which he wore were long, soft, and wide; when without looking he put down one foot from the bed to the floor it naturally fell into one of them.

Oblómof's remaining in bed was not obligatory upon him, as in the case of a sick man or of one who was anxious to sleep; nor was it accidental, as in the case of one who was weary; nor was it for mere pleasure, as a sluggard would have chosen: it was the normal condition of things with him. When he was at home — and he was almost always at home — he invariably lay in bed and invariably in the room where we have just found him: a room which served him for sleeping-room, library, and parlor. He had three other rooms, but he rarely glanced into them; in the morning, perhaps, but even then not every day, but only when his man came to sweep the rooms — and this, you may be sure, was not done every day. In these rooms the furniture was protected with covers; the curtains were always drawn.

The room in which Oblómof was lying appeared at first glance to be handsomely furnished There were a mahogany bureau, two sofas upholstered in silk, handsome screens embroidered with birds and fruits belonging to an imaginary nature. There were damask curtains, rugs, a number of paintings, bronzes, porcelains, and a quantity of beautiful bric-a-brac. But the experienced eye of a man of pure taste would have discovered at a single hasty glance that everything there betrayed merely the desire to keep up appearances in unimportant details, while really avoiding the burden. That had indeed been Oblómof's object when he furnished his room. Refined taste would not have been satisfied with those heavy ungraceful mahogany chairs, with those conventional étagères. The back of one sofa was dislocated; the veneering was broken off in places. The same characteristics were discoverable in the pictures and the vases, and all the ornaments.

The proprietor himself, however, looked with such coolness and indifference on the decoration of his apartment that one might think he asked with his eyes, « Who brought you here and set you up? » As the result of such an indifferent manner of regarding his possessions, and perhaps of the still more indifferent attitude of Oblómof's servant Zakhár, the appearance of the room, if it were examined rather more critically, was amazing because of the neglect and carelessness which held sway there. On the walls, around the pictures, spiders' webs, loaded with dust, hung like festoons; the mirrors, instead of reflecting objects, would have served better as tablets for scribbling memoranda in the dust that covered them. The rugs were rags. On the sofa lay a forgotten towel; on the table you would generally find in the morning a plate or two with the remains of the evening meal, the salt-cellar, gnawed bones, and crusts of bread. Were it not for these plates, and the pipe half smoked out and flung down on the bed, or even the master himself stretched out on it, it might easily have been supposed that the room was uninhabited, it was so dusty, so lacking in all traces of human care. On the étagères, to be sure, lay two or three opened books or a crumpled newspaper; on the bureau stood an inkstand with pens; but the pages where the books were open were covered thick with dust and had turned yellow, evidently long ago thrown aside; the date of the newspaper was long past; and if any one had dipped a pen into the inkstand it would have started forth only a frightened, buzzing fly!

Ílya Ílyitch was awake, contrary to his ordinary custom, very early,—at eight o'clock. Some anxiety was preying on his mind. Over his face passed alternately now apprehension, now annoyance, now vexation. It was evident that an internal conflict had him in its throes, and his intellect had not as yet come to his aid.

The fact was that the evening before, Oblómof had received from the stárosta (steward) of his estate a letter filled with disagreeable tidings. It is not hard to guess what unpleasant details one's steward may write about: bad harvests, large arrearages, diminution in receipts, and the like. But although his stárosta had written his master almost precisely the same kind of letter the preceding year and the year before that, nevertheless this latest letter came upon him exactly the same, as a disagreeable surprise.

Was it not hard? — he was facing the necessity of considering the means of taking some measures!

However, it is proper to show how far Ílya Ílyitch was justified in feeling anxiety about his affairs.

When he received the first letter of disagreeable tenor from his stárosta some years before, he was already contemplating a plan for a number of changes and improvements in the management of his property. This plan presupposed the introduction of various new economical and protectional measures; but the details of the scheme were still in embryo, and the stárosta's disagreeable letters were annually forthcoming, urging him to activity and really disturbing his peace of mind. Oblómof recognized the necessity of coming to some decision if he were to carry out his plan.

As soon as he woke he decided to get up, bathe, and after drinking his tea, to think the matter over carefully, then to write his letters; and in short, to act in this matter as was fitting. But for half an hour he had been still in bed tormenting himself with this proposition; but finally he came to the conclusion that he would still have time to do it after tea, and that he might drink his tea as usual in bed with all the more reason, because one can think even if one is lying down!

And so he did. After his tea he half sat up in bed, but did not entirely rise; glancing down at his slippers, he started to put his foot into one of them, but immediately drew it back into bed again.

As the clock struck half-past nine, Ílya Ílyitch started up.

«What kind of a man am I?» he said aloud in a tone of vexation. «Conscience only knows. It is time to do something: where there's a will — Zakhár!» he cried.

In a room which was separated merely by a narrow corridor from Ílya Ílyitch's library, nothing was heard at first except the growling of the watch-dog; then the thump of feet springing down from somewhere. It was Zakhár leaping down from his couch on the stove, where he generally spent his time immersed in drowsiness.

An elderly man appeared in the room: he was dressed in a gray coat, through a hole under the armpit of which emerged a part of his shirt; he also wore a gray waistcoat with brass buttons. His head was as bald as his knee, and he had enormous reddish side-whiskers already turning gray — so thick and bushy that they would have sufficed for three ordinary individuals.

Zakhár would never have taken pains to change in any respect either the form which God had bestowed on him, or the costume which he wore in the country. His raiment was made for him in the style which he had brought with him from his village. His gray coat and waistcoat pleased him, for the very reason that in his semi-fashionable attire he perceived a feeble approach to the livery which he had worn in former times when waiting on his former masters (now at rest), either to church or to parties; but liveries in his recollections were merely representative of the dignity of the Oblómof family. There was nothing else to recall to the old man the comfortable and liberal style of life on the estate in the depths of the country. The older generation of masters had died, the family portraits were at home, and in all probability were going to rack and ruin in the garret; the traditions of the former life and importance of the house of Oblómof were all extinct, or lived only in the memories of a few old people still lingering in the country.

Consequently, precious in the eyes of Zakhár was the gray coat: in this he saw a faint emblem of vanished greatness, and he found similar indications in some of the characteristics of his master's features and notions, reminding of his parentage, and in his caprices, which although he grumbled at them under his breath and aloud, yet he prized secretly as manifestations of the truly imperious will and autocratic spirit of a born noble. Had it not been for these whims, he would not have felt that his master was in any sense above him; had it not been for them, there would have been nothing to bring back to his mind his younger days, the village which they had abandoned so long ago, and the traditions about that ancient home,— the sole chronicles preserved by aged servants, nurses, and nursemaids, and handed down from mouth to mouth.

The house of the Oblómofs was rich in those days, and had great influence in that region; but afterwards somehow or other everything had gone to destruction, and at last by degrees had sunk out of sight, overshadowed by parvenus of aristocratic pretensions. Only the few gray-haired retainers of the house preserved and interchanged their reminiscences of the past, treasuring them like holy relics.

This was the reason why Zakhár so loved his gray coat. Possibly he valued his side-whiskers because of the fact that he saw in his childhood many of the older servants with this ancient and aristocratic adornment.

Ílya Ílyitch, immersed in contemplation, took no notice of Zakhár, though the servant had been silently waiting for some time. At last he coughed.

«What is it you want?» asked Ílya Ílyitch.

«You called me, didn't you?»

«Called you? I don't remember what I called you for,» he replied, stretching and yawning. «Go back to your room; I will try to think what I wanted.»

Zakhár went out, and Ílya Ílyitch lay down on the bed again and began to cogitate upon that cursed letter.

A quarter of an hour elapsed.

«There now,» he exclaimed, «I have dallied long enough; I must get up. However, I must read the stárosta's letter over again more attentively, and then I will get up — Zakhár!» The same noise of leaping down from the stove, and the same growling of the dog, only more emphatic.

Zakhár made his appearance, but again Oblómof was sunk deep in contemplation. Zakhár stood a few moments, looking sulkily and askance at his master, and finally he turned to go.

«Where are you going?» suddenly demanded Oblómof.

«You have nothing to say to me, and why should I waste my time standing here?» explained Zakhár, in a hoarse gasp which served him in lieu of a voice, he having lost his voice, according to his own account, while out hunting with the dogs when he had to accompany his former master, and when a powerful wind seemed to blow in his throat. He half turned round, and stood in the middle of the room and glared at his master.

« Have your legs quite given out, that you can't stand a minute? Don't you see I am worried? Now, please wait a moment! wasn't it lying there just now? Get me that letter which I received last evening from the stárosta. What did you do with it?»

« What letter? I haven't seen any letter,» replied Zakhár.

« Why, you yourself took it from the postman, you scoundrel!»

« It is where you put it; how should I know anything about it?» said Zakhár, beginning to rummage about among the papers and various things that littered the table.

« You never know anything at all. There, look on the basket. No, see if it hasn't been thrown on the sofa.— There, the back of that sofa hasn't been mended yet. Why have you not got the carpenter to mend it? 'Twas you who broke it. You never think of anything!»

« I didn't break it,» retorted Zakhár; « it broke itself; it was not meant to last forever; it had to break some time.»

Ílya Ílyitch did not consider it necessary to refute this argument. He contented himself with asking:—

« Have you found it yet?»

« Here are some letters.»

« But they are not the right ones.»

« Well, there's nothing else,» said Zakhár.

« Very good, be gone,» said Ílya Ílyitch impatiently. « I am going to get up. I will find it.»

Zakhár went to his room, but he had hardly laid his hand on his couch to climb up to it before the imperative cry was heard again:—

« Zakhár! Zakhár!»

« Oh, good Lord!» grumbled he, as he started to go for the third time to Oblómof's library. « What a torment all this is! Oh that death would come and take me from it!»

« What do you want?» he asked, as he stood with one hand on the door, and glaring at Oblómof as a sign of his surliness, at such an angle that he had to look at his master out of the corner of his eyes; while his master could see only one of his enormous side-whiskers, so bushy that you might have expected to have two or three birds come flying out from them.

« My handkerchief, quick! You might have known what I wanted. Don't you see?» remarked Ílya Ílyitch sternly.

Zakhár displayed no special dissatisfaction or surprise at such an order or such a reproach on his master's part, regarding both, so far as he was concerned, as perfectly natural.

« But who knows where your handkerchief is ? » he grumbled, circling about the room and making a careful examination of every chair, although it could be plainly seen that there was nothing whatever on them.

« It is a perfect waste of time, » he remarked, opening the door into the drawing-room in order to see if there was any sign of it there.

« Where are you going ? Look for it here; I have not been in that room since day before yesterday. And make haste, » urged Ílya Ílyitch.

« Where is the handkerchief ? There isn't any handkerchief, » exclaimed Zakhár rummaging and searching in every corner.

« Oh, there it is, » he suddenly cried angrily, « under you. There is the end of it sticking out. You were lying on it, and yet you ask me to find your handkerchief for you! »

And Zakhár, without awaiting any reply, turned and started to go out. Oblómof was somewhat ashamed of his own blunder. But he quickly discovered another pretext for putting Zakhár in the wrong.

« What kind of neatness do you call this everywhere here! Look at the dust and dirt! Good heavens! look here, look here! See these corners! You don't do anything at all. »

«And so I don't do anything, » repeated Zakhár in a tone betokening deep resentment. « I am growing old, I shan't live much longer! But God knows I use the duster for the dust, and I sweep almost every day. »

He pointed to the middle of the floor, and at the table where Oblómof had dined. « Here, look here, » he went on: « it has all been swept and all put in order, fit for a wedding. What more is needed ? »

« Well then, what is this ? » cried Ílya Ílyitch, interrupting him and calling his attention to the walls and the ceiling. «And that ? and that ? »

He pointed to a yesterday's napkin which had been flung down, and to a plate which had been left lying on the table with a dry crust of bread on it.

« Well, as for that, » said Zakhár as he picked up the plate, « I will take care of it. »

«You will take care of it, will you? But how about the dust and the cobwebs on the walls?» said Oblómof, making ocular demonstration.

«I put that off till Holy Week; then I clean the sacred images and sweep down the cobwebs.»

«But how about dusting the books and pictures?»

«The books and pictures? Before Christmas; then Anísiya and I look over all the closets. But now when should we be able to do it? You are always at home.»

«I sometimes go to the theatre or go out to dine: you might—»

«Do house-cleaning at night?»

Oblómof looked at him reproachfully, shook his head, and uttered a sigh; but Zakhár gazed indifferently out of the window and also sighed deeply. The master seemed to be thinking, «Well, brother, you are even more of an Oblómof than I am myself;» while Zakhár probably said to himself, «Rubbish! You as my master talk strange and melancholy words, but how do dust and cobwebs concern you?»

«Don't you know that moths breed in dust?» asked Ílya Ílyitch. «I have even seen bugs on the wall!»

«Well, I have fleas on me sometimes,» replied Zakhár in a tone of indifference.

«Well, is that anything to boast about? That is shameful,» exclaimed Oblómof.

Zakhár's face was distorted by a smirking smile, which seemed to embrace even his eyebrows and his side-whiskers, which for this reason spread apart; and over his whole face up to his very forehead extended a ruddy spot.

«Why, am I to blame that there are bugs on the wall?» he asked in innocent surprise: «was it I who invented them?»

«They come from lack of cleanliness,» insisted Oblómof. «What are you talking about?»

«I am not the cause of the uncleanliness.»

«But you have mice in your room there running about at night—I hear them.»

«I did not invent the mice. There are all kinds of living creatures—mice and cats and fleas—lots of them everywhere.»

«How is it that other people don't have moths and bugs?»

Zakhár's face expressed incredulity, or rather a calm conviction that this was not so.

«I have plenty of them,» he said without hesitation. «One can't look after every bug and crawl into the cracks after them.»

It seemed to be his thought, «What kind of a sleeping-room would that be that had no bugs in it?»

«Now do you see to it that you sweep and brush them out of the corners; don't let there be one left,» admonished Oblómof.

«If you get it all cleaned up it will be just as bad again to-morrow,» remonstrated Zakhár.

«It ought not to be as bad,» interrupted the master.

«But it is,» insisted the servant; «I know all about it.»

«Well then, if the dust collects again, brush it out again.»

«What is that you say? Brush out all the corners every day?» exclaimed Zakhár. «What a life that would be! Better were it that God should take my soul!»

«Why are other people's houses clean?» urged Oblómof. «Just look at the piano-tuner's rooms: see how neat they look, and only one maid —»

«Oh, these Germans!» exclaimed Zakhár suddenly interrupting. «Where do they make any litter? Look at the way they live! Every family gnaws a whole week on a single bone. The coat goes from the father's back to the son's, and back from the son's to the father's. The wives and daughters wear little short skirts, and when they walk they all lift up their legs like ducks — where do they get any dirt? They don't do as we do — leave a whole heap of soiled clothes in the closet for a year at a time, or fill up the corners with bread crusts for the winter. Their crusts are never flung down at random: they make zweiback out of them, and eat them when they drink their beer!»

Zakhár expressed his disgust at such a penurious way of living by spitting through his teeth.

«Say nothing more,» expostulated Ílya Ílyitch. «Do better work with your house-cleaning.»

«One time I would have cleaned up, but you yourself would not allow it,» said Zakhár.

«That is all done with! Don't you see I have entirely changed?»

«Of course you have; but still you stay at home all the time: how can one begin to clean up when you are right here? If you will stay out of the house for a whole day, then I will have a general clearing-up.»

« What an idea! Get out of here. You had better go to your own room.»

«All right!» persisted Zakhár; « but I tell you, the moment you go out, Anísiya and I will clear the whole place up. And we two would finish with it in short metre; then you will want some women to wash everything.»

« Oh, what schemes you invent! Women! away with you!» cried Ílya Ílyitch.

He was by this time disgusted with himself for having led Zakhár into this conversation. He had quite forgotten that the attainment of this delicate object was at the expense of considerable confusion. Oblómof would have liked a state of perfect cleanliness, but he would require that it should be brought about in some imperceptible manner, as it were of itself; but Zakhár always induced a discussion as soon as he was asked to have any sweeping done, or the floors washed, and the like. In such a contingency he was sure to point out the necessity of a terrible disturbance in the house, knowing very well that the mere suggestion of such a thing would fill his master with horror.

Zakhár went away, and Oblómof relapsed into cogitation. After some minutes the half-hour struck again.

« What time is it?» exclaimed Ílya Ílyitch with a dull sense of alarm. «Almost eleven o'clock! Can it be that I am not up yet nor had my bath? Zakhár! Zakhár!»

« Oh, good God! what is it now?» was heard from the anteroom, and then the well-known thump of feet.

« Is my bath ready?» asked Oblómof.

« Ready? yes, long ago,» replied Zakhár. « Why did you not get up?»

« Why didn't you tell me it was ready? I should have got up long ago if you had. Go on; I will follow you immediately. I have some business to do; I want to write.»

Zakhár went out, but in the course of a few minutes he returned with a greasy copy-book all scribbled over, and some scraps of paper.

« Here, if you want to write — and by the way, be kind enough to verify these accounts: we need the money to pay them.»

« What accounts? what money?» demanded Ílya Ílyitch with a show of temper.

« From the butcher, from the grocer, from the laundress, from the baker; they all are clamoring for money.»

«Nothing but bother about money,» growled Ílya Ílyitch. «But why didn't you give them to me one at a time instead of all at once?»

«You see you always kept putting me off: 'To-morrow,' always 'To-morrow.'»

«Well, why shouldn't we put them off till to-morrow now?»

«No! they are dunning you; they won't give any longer credit. To-morrow's the first of the month.»

«Akh!» cried Oblómof in vexation, «new bother! Well, why are you standing there? Put them on the table. I will get up immediately, take my bath, and look them over,» said Ílya Ílyitch. «Is it all ready for my bath?»

«What do you mean—'ready'?» said Zakhár.

«Well, now—»

With a groan he started to make the preliminary movement of getting up.

«I forgot to tell you,» began Zakhár, «while you were still asleep the manager sent word by the dvórnik that it was imperatively necessary that you vacate the apartment: it is wanted.»

«Well, what of that? If the apartment is wanted of course we will move out. Why do you bother me with it? This is the third time you have spoken to me about it.»

«They bother me about it also.»

«Tell them that we will move out.»

«He says, 'For a month you have been promising,' says he, 'and still you don't move out,' says he: 'we'll report the matter to the police.'»

«Let him report,» cried Oblómof resolutely: «we will move out as soon as it is a little warmer, in the course of three weeks.»

«Three weeks, indeed! The manager says that the workmen are coming in a fortnight: everything is to be torn out. 'Move,' says he, 'either to-morrow or day after to-morrow.'»

«Eh—eh—eh—that's too short notice: to-morrow? See here, what next? How would this minute suit? But don't you dare speak a word to me about apartments. I have already told you that once, and here you are again. Do you hear?»

«But what shall I do?» demanded Zakhár.

«What shall you do? Now how is he going to get rid of me?» replied Ílya Ílyitch. «He makes me responsible! How does it concern me? Don't you trouble me any further, but make any arrangements you please, only so that we don't have to move yet. Can't you do your best for your master?"

"But Ílya Ílyitch, little father [bátiushka], what arrangements shall I make?" began Zakhár in a hoarse whisper. "The house is not mine; how can we help being driven out of the place if they resort to force? If only the house were mine, then I would with the greatest pleasure —"

"There must be some way of bringing him around: tell him we have lived here so long; tell him we'll surely pay him."

"I have," said Zakhár.

"Well, what did he say?"

"What did he say? He repeated his everlasting 'Move out,' says he; 'we want to make repairs on the apartment.' He wants to do over this large apartment and the doctor's for the wedding of the owner's son."

"Oh, my good Lord!" exclaimed Oblómof in despair; "what asses they are to get married!"

He turned over on his back.

"You had better write to the owner, sir," said Zakhár. "Then perhaps he would not drive us out, but would give us a renewal of the lease."

Zakhár as he said this made a gesture with his right hand.

"Very well, then; as soon as I get up I will write him. You go to your room and I will think it over. You need not do anything about this," he added; "I myself shall have to work at all this miserable business myself."

Zakhár left the room, and Oblómof began to ponder.

But he was in a quandary which to think about,—his stárosta's letter, or the removal to new lodgings, or should he undertake to make out his accounts? He was soon swallowed up in the flood of material cares and troubles, and there he still lay turning from side to side. Every once in a while would be heard his broken exclamation, "Akh, my God! life touches everything reaches everywhere!"

No one knows how long he would have lain there a prey to this uncertainty, had not the bell rung in the ante-room.

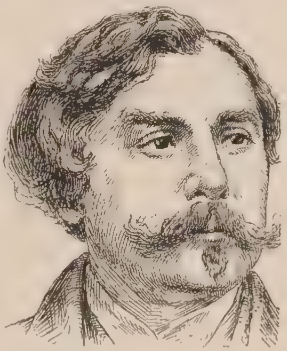
"There is some one come already!" exclaimed Oblómof, wrapping himself up in his khalát, "and here I am not up yet; what a shame! Who can it be so early?"

And still lying on his bed, he gazed curiously at the door.

THE BROTHERS DE GONCOURT

EDMOND (1822–1896) JULES (1830–1870)

Edmond and Jules Huot de Goncourt, French writers who became famous alike for the perfectness of their collaboration, the originality of their methods, and the finish of their style, were born, the first in Nancy in 1822, the other in Paris in 1830. Until the death of Jules in 1870 they wrote nothing for the public that did not bear both their names; and so entirely identical were their tastes and judgment that it is impossible to say of a single sentence they composed that it was the sole product of one or the other. «Charming writers,» Victor Hugo called them; «in unison a powerful writer, two minds from which springs a single jet of talent.» Born of a noble family of moderate wealth, they were educated as became their station in life. Both had an early leaning toward the arts; but Edmond, in deference to the wishes of his family, took a government appointment and held the office till the death of his mother, when he was twenty-six years of age. Their father had died while they were boys.


EDMOND DE GONCOURT

Drawn together by their common bereavement and the death-bed injunction of their parent that Edmond should be the careful guardian of his younger brother, whose health had always been delicate, the young men then began a companionship which was broken only by death. They set out to make themselves acquainted with southern Europe, and at the same time to escape the political turmoils of Paris; and extended their travels into Africa, which country they found so congenial that in the first ardor of their enthusiasm they determined to settle there. Business arrangements, however, soon recalled them to Paris, where ties of friendship and other agreeable associations bound them fast to their native soil. They took up their residence in the metropolis, where they lived until a short time before the death of Jules, when, to be free from the roar of the city, they purchased a house in one of the suburbs. Their intellectual development may be traced through their Journal and letters to intimate friends, published by the surviving brother. From these it appears that most of their leisure hours during their travels were taken up with painting and drawing. Jules had attempted some dramatic compositions while at college, and Edmond had been strongly drawn to literature by the conversation of an aunt, of whom he saw much before his mother's death. It was while engaged with their brushes in 1850 that it occurred to the brothers to take up writing as a regular vocation; and thus was begun their remarkable literary partnership.

Their first essay was a drama. It was rejected; whereupon, nothing daunted, they wrote a novel. It was entitled '18—,' and it is interesting to observe that here, at the very outset of their career, they seem to have had in mind the keynote of the chord on which they ever afterwards played: the eighteenth century was the chief source of their inspiration, and it was their life's endeavor to explore it and reproduce it for their contemporaries with painstaking fidelity. The novel engaged their serious and earnest attention, and when it was given to the publisher they watched for its appearance with painful anxiety. Unfortunately it was announced for the very day on which occurred the *Coup d'État*. The book came out when Paris was in an uproar; and though Jules Janin, one of the most influential critics of the day, unexpectedly exploited it at great length in the Journal des Débats, its circulation in that first edition was not more than sixty copies, most of which were distributed gratuitously.

The blow was a hard one, but the brothers were not thus to be silenced, nor by the subsequent failure of other dramatic ventures and an effort to found a newspaper. They had been little more than imitators. They now entered the field they soon made their own. The writers of their day were for the most part classicists; a few before Victor Hugo were romanticists. The De Goncourts stood for the modern, what they could see and touch. In this way they became realists. What their own senses could not apprehend they at once rejected; all they saw they deemed worthy to be reproduced. They lived in a period of reconstruction after the devastation of the revolution. The refinement and elegance of the society of the later Bourbon monarchy, still within view, they yearned for and sought to restore. A series of monographs dealing with the art and the stage of these days, which appeared in 1851–2, won for them the first real recognition they enjoyed. These were followed by various critical essays on the same subjects, contributed to newspapers and periodicals, and a novel, 'La Lorette,' which had a large sale and marked the beginning of their success from a financial point of view. «This makes us realize,» they wrote in their Journal, «that one can actually sell a book.»

Their reputation as men of letters was established by the publication in 1854-5 of ‹Histoire de la Société Pendant la Revolution› and the same ‹Pendant le Directoire,› the aim of which, they said, was «to paint in vivid, simple colors the France of 1789 to 1800.» This object they accomplished, so far as it concerned the society of which they themselves were descendants; but the reactionary spirit in them was too strong for an impartial view of the struggle, and their lack of true philosophic spirit and broad human sympathy led them to make a picture that, interesting as it is, is sadly distorted. Their vivid colors are lavished mainly on the outrages of the rioters and the sufferings of the aristocrats. But for wealth of detail, the result of tireless research, the history is of value as a record of the manners and customs of the fashionable set of the period. Of the same sort were their other semi-historical works: ‹Portraits Intimes du XVIIIième Siècle,› separate sketches of about a hundred more or less well-known figures of the age; ‹L'Histoire de Marie Antoinette,› and ‹La Femme au XVIIIième Siècle,› in which the gossip and anecdote of former generations are told again almost as graphically as are those which the authors relate of their own circle in their memoirs. Their most important contribution to literature was their ‹L'Art au XVIIIième Siècle,› monographs gathered and published in seventeen volumes, and representing a dozen years' labor. This was indeed a labor of love, and it was not in vain; for it was these appreciative studies more than anything else that turned public attention to the almost forgotten delicacy of the school of painters headed by Watteau, Fragonard, Latour, Boucher, Debricourt, and Greuze, whose influence has ever since been manifested on the side of sound taste and sanity in French art.

A volume entitled ‹Idées et Sensations,› and their Journal and letters, complete the list of the more important of their works outside the field of fiction. The Journal will always be valuable as an almost complete document of the literary history of France in their time, made up as it is of impressions of and from the most important writers of the day, with whom they were on terms of intimate friendship, including Flaubert, Gautier, Renan, Sainte-Beuve, Hugo, Saint-Victor, Michelet, Zola, and George Sand. In fiction the De Goncourts were less prolific, but it is to their novels mainly that they owe their reputation for individuality, and as true «path-breakers» in literature. They have been called the initiators of modern French realism. Their friend Flaubert perhaps better deserves the title. Their determination to see for themselves all that could be seen, the result of which gave real worth to their historical work, even where their prejudice robbed it of weight, was what put the stamp of character upon their novels. How much importance they attached to correct and comprehensive observation may be gathered from their remark, «The art of learning how to see demands the longest apprenticeship of all the arts.» They took life as they found it, examined it on every side,—rarely going far under the surface,—and then sought to reproduce it on their pages as the artist would put it on canvas. Capable of terseness, of suggestiveness, quick to note and communicate the vital spark, they were yet rarely content with it alone. Every minute particle of the body it vivified, they insisted on adding to their picture. Nothing was to be taken for granted; as nothing was accepted by them at second hand, so nothing was left to the imagination of the reader until their comprehensive view was his. It was in this way that they were realists. They did not seek out and expose to public view the grossness and unpleasantness of life. Their own preference was for the beautiful, and in their own lives they indulged their refined tastes. But they looked squarely at the world about them, the ugly with the beautiful, the impure with the pure, and they did not hesitate to describe one almost as faithfully as the other.

Curiously, the discrimination against the masses and the bias that mar their history do not appear in their fiction. «They began writing history which was nothing but romance,» says one of their critics, «and later wrote romance which in reality is history.» Indeed, their novels are little more than sketches of what occurred around them. ‹Madame Gervaisais› is a character study of the aunt of strong literary predilections who influenced Edmond; ‹Germinie Lacerteux› is the biography of their servant, at whose death, after long and faithful service, they discovered that she had led a life of singular duplicity; ‹Sœur Philomène› is a terribly true glimpse of hospital life, and ‹Manette Salomon,› with its half-human monkey drawn from the life, is transferred without change from the Parisian studios under the Empire. ‹Renée Mauperin› comes nearest to the model of an ordinary novel; but no one can read of the innocent tomboy girl struck down with fatal remorse at the consequences of her own natural action, on learning of her brother's dishonor, without feeling that this picture too was drawn from the life. Several of their stories were dramatized, but with scant success; and a play which they wrote, ‹Henriette Maréchal,› and had produced at the Comédie Française through the influence of Princess Mathilde, their constant friend and patroness, was almost howled down,—chiefly however for political reasons.

After the death of Jules de Goncourt, his brother wrote several books of the same character as those which they produced in union, the best known of which are ‹La Fille Élisa,› and ‹Chérie,› a study of a girl, said to have been inspired by the Journal of Marie Bashkirtseff. The best critics in France, notably Sainte-Beuve, have given the brothers Goncourt a very high place in literature and conceded their originality. English reviewers have been less ready to exalt them, mainly on account of the offensive part of their realism. They have objected also to their superficiality as historians, and to their sympathy with the sentimental admirers of such types as Marie Antoinette; but they too have been ready to praise the brothers as leaders of a new fashion, and especially for their devotion to style. In this respect the Goncourts have few rivals in French literature. Balzac himself was not more finical in the choice of words, or more unsparing of his time and energy in writing and re-writing until his exact meaning, no more or less, had been expressed; and they covered up the marks of their toil better than he. In a letter to Zola, Edmond de Goncourt said:—« My own idea is that my brother died of work, and above all from the desire to elaborate the artistic form, the chiseled phrase, the workmanship of style.» He himself spent a long life at this fine artistry, and died in Paris in July, 1896.

TWO FAMOUS MEN

From the Journal of the De Goncourts

MARCH 3D [1862].—We took a walk and went off to find Théophile Gautier. . . . The street in which he lives is composed of the most squalid countrified buildings, of court-yards swarming with poultry, fruit shops whose doors are ornamented with little brooms of black feathers: just such a suburban street as Hervier might have painted. . . . We pushed open the door of a house, and found ourselves in the presence of the lord of epithet. The furniture was of gilded wood, covered with red damask, after the heavy Venetian style; there were fine old pictures of the Italian school; above the chimney a mirror innocent of quicksilver, on which were scraped colored arabesques and various Persian characters,—such a picture of meagre sumptuousness and faded splendor as one would find in the rooms of a retired actress, who had come in for some pictures through the bankruptcy of an Italian manager.

When we asked him if we were disturbing him, he answered: «Not at all. I never work at home. I get through my 'copy' at the printing-office. They set up the type as I write. The smell of the printers' ink is a sure stimulant to work, for one feels the 'copy' must be handed in. I could write only a novel in this way now; unless I saw ten lines printed I could not get on to the next ten. The proof-sheet serves as a test to one's work. That which is already done becomes impersonal, but the actual 'copy' is part of yourself; it hangs like filaments from the root of your literary life, and has not yet been torn away. I have always been preparing corners where I should do my work, but when installed there I found I could do nothing. I must be in the midst of things, and can work only when a racket is going on about me; whereas, when I shut myself up for work the solitude tells upon me and makes me sad."

From there Gautier got on the subject of the 'Queen of Sheba.' We admitted our infirmity, our physical incapacity of taking in musical sound; and indeed, a military band is the highest musical enjoyment of which we are capable. Whereupon Gautier said, "Well, I'm delighted to hear that: I am just like you; I prefer silence to music. I do know bad music from good, because part of my life was spent with a singer, but both are quite indifferent to me. Still it is curious that all the literary men of our day feel the same about music. Balzac abhorred it, Hugo cannot endure it, Lamartine has a horror of it. There are only a few painters who have a taste for it."

Then Gautier fell to complaining of the times. "Perhaps I am getting an old man, but I begin to feel as if there were no more air to breathe. What is the use of wings if there is no air in which one can soar? I no longer feel as if I belonged to the present generation. Yes, 1830 was a glorious epoch, but I was too young by two or three years; I was not carried away by the current; I was not ready for it. I ought to have produced a very different sort of work."

There was then some talk of Flaubert, of his literary methods, of his indefatigable patience, and of the seven years he devoted to a work of four hundred pages. "Just listen," observed Gautier, "to what Flaubert said to me the other day: 'It is finished. I have only ten more pages to write; but the ends of my sentences are all in my head.' So that he already hears in anticipation the music of the last words of his sentences before the sentences themselves have been written. Was it not a quaint expression to use? I believe he has devised a sort of literary rhythm. For instance, a phrase which begins in slow measure must not finish with a quick pace, unless some special effect is to be produced. Sometimes the rhythm is only apparent to himself, and escapes our notice. A story is not written for the purpose of being read aloud: yet he shouts his to himself as he writes them. These shouts present to his own ears harmonies, but his readers seem unaware of them."

Gautier's daughters have a charm of their own, a species of Oriental languor, deep dreamy eyes, veiled by heavy eyelids, and a regularity in their gestures and movements which they inherit from their father; but this regularity is tempered in them by womanly grace. There is a charm about them which is not all French; nevertheless there is a French element about it, their little tomboyish tricks and expressions, their habit of pouting, the shrugging of their shoulders, the irony which escapes through the thin veil of childishness intended to conceal it. All these points distinguish them from ordinary society girls, and make clear a strong individuality of character which renders them fearless in expressing their likings and antipathies. They display liberty of speech, and have often the manner of a woman whose face is hidden by a mask; and yet one finds here simplicity, candor, and a charming absence of reserve, utterly unknown to the ordinary young girl.

NOVEMBER 23D [1863].—We have been to thank Michelet for the flattering lines he wrote about us.

He lives in the Rue de l'Ouest, at the end of the Jardin du Luxembourg, in a large house which might almost be workmen's dwellings. His flat is on the third floor. A maid opened the door and announced us. We penetrated into a small study.

The wife of the historian has a young, serious face; she was seated on a chair beside the desk on which the lamp was placed, with her back to the window. Michelet sat on a couch of green velvet, and was banked up by cushions.

His attitude reminded us of his historical work: the lower portions of his body were in full sight, whilst the upper were half concealed; the face was a mere shadow surrounded with snowy white locks; from this shadowy mass emerged a professorial, sonorous, singsong voice, consciously important, and in which the ascending and descending scale produced a continuous cooing sound.

He spoke to us in a most appreciative manner of our study of Watteau, and then passed on to the interesting study which might be written on French furniture.

"You gentlemen, who are observers of human nature," he cried suddenly, "there is a history you should write,—the history of the lady's-maid. I do not speak of Madame de Maintenon; but you have Mademoiselle de Launai, the Duchesse de Grammont's Julie, who exercised on her mistress so great an influence, especially in the Corsican affair. Madame Du Deffand said sometimes that there were only two people sincerely attached to her, D'Alembert and her maid. Oh! domesticity has played a great part in history, though men-servants have been of comparative unimportance. . . .

"I was once going through England, traveling from York to Halifax. There were pavements in the country lanes, with the grass growing on each side as carefully kept as the pavements themselves; close by, sheep were grazing, and the whole scene was lit up by gas. A singular sight!"

Then after a short pause:—"Have you noticed that the physiognomy of the great men of to-day is so rarely in keeping with their intellect? Look at their portraits, their photographs: there are no longer any good portraits. Remarkable people no longer possess in their faces anything which distinguishes them from ordinary folk. Balzac had nothing characteristic. Would you recognize Lamartine if you saw him? There is nothing in the shape of his head, or in his lustreless eyes, nothing but a certain elegance which age has not affected. The fact is that in these days there is too great an accumulation of people and things, much more so than in former times. We assimilate too much from other people, and this being the case, we lose even the individuality of our features; we present the portrait of a collective set of people rather than of ourselves."

We rose to take our leave; he accompanied us to the door; then by the light of the lamp he carried in his hand we saw, for a second at least, this marvelous historian of dreams, the great somnambulist of the past and brilliant talker of the present.

THE SUICIDE

From ‹Sister Philomène›

The next morning the whole hospital knew that Barnier, having scratched his hand on the previous day while dissecting a body in a state of purulent infection, was dying in terrible agonies.

When at four o'clock Malivoire, quitting for a few moments the bedside of his friend, came to replace him in the service, the Sister went up to him. She followed from bed to bed, dogging his steps, without however accosting him, without speaking, watching him intently with her eyes fixed on his. As he was leaving the ward:—

«Well?» she asked, in the brief tone with which women stop the doctor on his last visit at the threshold of the room.

«No hope,» said Malivoire, with a gesture of despair; «there is nothing to be done. It began at his right ankle, went up the leg and thigh, and has attacked all the articulations. Such agonies, poor fellow! It will be a mercy when it's over.»

«Will he be dead before night?» asked the Sister calmly.

«Oh no! He will live through the night. It is the same case as that of Raguideau three years ago; and Raguideau lasted forty-eight hours.»

That evening, at ten o'clock, Sister Philomène might be seen entering the church of Notre Dame des Victoires.

The lamps were being lowered, the lighted tapers were being put out one by one with a long-handled extinguisher. The priest had just left the vestry.

The Sister inquired where he lived, and was told that his house was a couple of steps from the church, in the Rue de la Banque.

The priest was just going into the house when she entered behind, pushing open the door he was closing.

«Come in, Sister,» he said, unfurling his wet umbrella and placing it on the tiled floor in the ante-room. And he turned toward her She was on her knees. «What are you doing, Sister?» he said, astonished at her attitude. «Get up, my child. This is not a fit place. Come, get up!»

«You will save him, will you not?» and Philomène caught hold of the priest's hands as he stretched them out to help her to rise. «Why do you object to my remaining on my knees?»

«Come, come, my child, do not be so excited. It is God alone, remember, who can save. I can but pray.»

«Ah! you can only pray,» she said in a disappointed tone. «Yes, that is true.»

And her eyes sank to the ground. After a moment's pause the priest went on:—

«Come, Sister, sit down there. You are calmer now, are you not? Tell me, what is it you want?»

«He is dying,» said Philomène, rising as she spoke. «He will probably not live through the night;» and she began to cry. «It is for a young man of twenty-seven years of age; he has never performed any of his religious duties, never been near a church, never prayed to God since his first communion. He will refuse to listen to anything. He no longer knows a prayer even. He will listen neither to priest nor any one. And I tell you it is all over with him,—he is dying. Then I remembered your Confraternity of Notre Dame des Victoires, since it is devoted to those who do not believe. Come, you must save him!»

«My daughter—»

«And perhaps he is dying at this very moment. Oh! promise me you will do all at once, all that is in the Confraternity book; the prayers,—everything, in short. You will have him prayed for at once, won't you?»

«But, my poor child, it is Friday to-day, and the Confraternity only meets on Thursday.»

«Thursday only—why? It will be too late Thursday. He will never live till Thursday. Come, you must save him; you have saved many another.»

Sister Philomène looked at the priest with wide-opened eyes, in which through her tears rose a glance of revolt, impatience, and command. For one instant in that room there was no longer a Sister standing before a priest, but a woman face to face with an old man.

The priest resumed:—

«All I can do at present for that young man, my dear daughter, is to apply to his benefit all the prayers and good works that are being carried on by the Confraternity, and I will offer them up to the Blessed and Immaculate Heart of Mary to obtain his conversion. I will pray for him to-morrow at mass, and again on Saturday and Sunday.»

«Oh, I am so thankful,» said Philomène, who felt tears rise gently to her eyes as the priest spoke to her. «Now I am full of hope; he will be converted, he will have pity on himself. Give me your blessing for him."

"But Sister, I only bless from the altar, in the pulpit, or in the confessional. There only am I the minister of God. Here, my Sister, here I am but a weak man, a miserable sinner."

"That does not signify; you are always God's minister, and you cannot, you would not, refuse me; he is at the point of death."

She fell on her knees as she spoke. The priest blessed her, and added:—

"It is nearly eleven o'clock, Sister; you have nearly three miles to get home, all Paris to cross at this late hour."

"Oh, I am not afraid," replied Philomène with a smile; "God knows why I am in the street. Moreover, I will tell my beads on the way. The Blessed Virgin will be with me." . . .

The same evening, Barnier, rousing himself from a silence that had lasted the whole day, said to Malivoire, "You will write to my mother. You will tell her that this often happens in our profession."

"But you are not yet as bad as all that, my dear fellow," replied Malivoire, bending over the bed. "I am sure I shall save you."

"No, I chose my man too well for that. How well I took you in, my poor Malivoire!" and he smiled almost. "You understand, I could not kill myself. I did not wish to be the death of my old mother. But an accident—that settles everything. You will take all my books, do you hear? and my case of instruments also. I wish you to have all. You wonder why I have killed myself, don't you? Come nearer. It is on account of that woman. I never loved but her in all my life. They did not give her enough chloroform; I told them so. Ah! if you had heard her scream when she awoke—before it was over! That scream still re-echoes in my ears! However," he continued, after a nervous spasm, "if I had to begin again, I would choose some other way of dying, some way in which I should not suffer so much. Then, you know, she died, and I fancied I had killed her. She is ever before me, . . . covered with blood. . . . And then I took to drinking. I drank because I love her still. . . . That's all!"

Barnier relapsed into silence. After a long pause, he again spoke, and said to Malivoire:—

«You will tell my mother to take care of the little lad.»

After another pause, the following words escaped him:—

«The Sister would have said a prayer.»

Shortly after, he asked:—

«What o'clock is it?»

«Eleven.»

«Time is not up yet; . . . I have still some hours to live. . . . I shall last till to-morrow.»

A little later he again inquired the time, and crossing his hands on his breast, in a faint voice he called Malivoire and tried to speak to him. But Malivoire could not catch the words he muttered.

Then the death-rattle began, and lasted till morn. . . .

A candle lighted up the room.

It burnt slowly, it lighted up the four white walls on which the coarse ochre paint of the door and of the two cupboards cut a sharp contrast. . . .

On the iron bedstead with its dimity curtains, a sheet lay thrown over a motionless body, molding the form as wet linen might do, indicating with the inflexibility of an immutable line the rigidity, from the tip of the toes to the sharp outline of the face, of what it covered.

Near a white wooden table Malivoire, seated in a large wicker arm-chair, watched and dozed, half slumbering and yet not quite asleep.

In the silence of the room nothing could be heard but the ticking of the dead man's watch.

From behind the door something seemed gently to move and advance, the key turned in the lock, and Sister Philomène stood beside the bed. Without looking at Malivoire, without seeing him, she knelt down and prayed in the attitude of a kneeling marble statue; and the folds of her gown were as motionless as the sheet that covered the dead man.

At the end of a quarter of an hour she rose, walked away without once looking round, and disappeared.

The next day, awaking at the hollow sound of the coffin knocking against the narrow stairs, Malivoire vaguely recalled the night's apparition, and wondered if he had dreamed it; and going mechanically up to the table by the bedside, he sought for the lock of hair he had cut off for Barnier's mother: the lock of hair had vanished.

THE AWAKENING

From 'Renée Mauperin'

A LITTLE stage had been erected at the end of the Mauperins' drawing-room. The footlights were hidden behind a screen of foliage and flowering shrubs. Renée, with the help of her drawing-master, had painted the curtain, which represented a view on the banks of the Seine. On either side of the stage hung a bill, on which were these words, written by hand:—

LA BRICHE THEATRE
THIS EVENING,
'THE CAPRICE,'
To conclude with
'HARLEQUIN, A BIGAMIST.'

And then followed the names of the actors.

On all the chairs in the house, which had been seized and arranged in rows before the stage, women in low gowns were squeezed together, mixing their skirts, their lace, the sparkle of their diamonds, and the whiteness of their shoulders. The folding doors of the drawing-room had been taken down, and showed, in the little drawing-room which led to the dining-room, a crowd of men in white neckties, standing on tiptoe.

The curtain rose upon 'The Caprice.' Renée played with much spirit the part of Madame de Léry. Henry, as the husband, revealed one of those real theatrical talents which are often found in cold young men and in grave men of the world. Naomi herself — carried away by Henry's acting, carefully prompted by Denoisel from behind the scenes, a little intoxicated by her audience — played her little part of a neglected wife very tolerably. This was a great relief to Madame Bourjot. Seated in the front row, she had followed her daughter with anxiety. Her pride dreaded a failure. The curtain fell, the applause burst out, and all the company were called for. Her daughter had not been ridiculous; she was happy in this great success, and she composedly gave herself up to the speeches, opinions, congratulations, which, as in all representations of private theatricals, followed the applause and continued in murmurs. Amidst all that she thus vaguely heard, one sentence, pronounced close by her, reached her ears clear and distinct above the buzz of general conversation: — "Yes, it is his sister, I know; but I think that for the part he is not sufficiently in love with her, and really too much in love with his wife: did you notice it?" And the speaker, feeling that she was being overheard by Madame Bourjot, leaned over and whispered in her neighbor's ear. Madame Bourjot became serious.

After a pause the curtain went up again, and Henry Mauperin appeared as Pierrot or Harlequin, not in the traditional sack of white calico and black cap, but as an Italian harlequin, with a white three-cornered hat, and dressed entirely in white satin from head to foot. A shiver of interest ran through the women, proving that the costume and the man were both charming; and the folly began.

It was the mad story of Pierrot, married to one woman and wishing to marry another; a farce intermingled with passion, which had been unearthed by a playwright, with the help of a poet, from a collection of old comic plays. Renée this time acted the part of the neglected woman, who in various disguises interfered between her husband and his gallant adventures, and Naomi that of the woman he loved. Henry, in his scenes of love with the latter, carried all before him. He played with youth, with brilliancy, with excitement. In the scene in which he avows his love, his voice was full of the passionate cry of a declaration which overflows and swamps everything. True, he had to act with the prettiest Columbine in the world: Naomi looked delicious that evening in her bridal costume of Louis XVI., copied exactly from the 'Bride's Minuet,' a print by Debucourt, which Barousse had lent for the purpose.

A sort of enchantment filled the whole room, and reached Madame Bourjot; a sort of sympathetic complicity with the actors seemed to encourage the pretty couple to love one another. The piece went on. Now and again Henry's eyes seemed to look for those of Madame Bourjot, over the footlights. Meanwhile, Renée appeared disguised as the village bailiff; it only remained to sign the contract; Pierrot, taking the hand of the woman he loved, began to tell her of all the happiness he was going to have with her.

The woman who sat next to Madame Bourjot felt her lean somewhat on her shoulder. Henry finished his speech, the piece disentangled itself and came to an end. All at once Madame

Bourjot's neighbor saw something glide down her arm; it was Madame Bourjot, who had just fainted.

«Oh, do pray go indoors,» said Madame Bourjot to the people who were standing around her. She had been carried into the garden. «It is past now; it is really nothing; it was only the heat.» She was quite pale, but she smiled. «I only want a little air. Let M. Henry only stay with me.»

The audience retired. Scarcely had the sound of feet died away, when—«You love her!» said Madame Bourjot, seizing Henry's arm as though she were taking him prisoner with her feverish hands; «you love her!»

«Madame—» said Henry.

«Hold your tongue! you lie!» And she threw his arm from her. Henry bowed.—«I know all. I have seen all. But look at me!» and with her eyes she closely scanned his face. Henry stood before her, his head bent.—«At least speak to me! You can speak, at any rate! Ah, I see it,—you can only act in her company!»

«I have nothing to say to you, Laura,» said Henry in his softest and clearest voice. Madame Bourjot started at this name of Laura as though he had touched her. «I have struggled for a year, madame,» began Henry; «I have no excuse to make. But my heart is fast. We knew each other as children. The charm has grown day by day. I am very unhappy, madame, at having to acknowledge the truth to you. I love your daughter, that is true.»

«But have you ever spoken to her? I blush for her when there are people there! Have you ever looked at her? Do you think her pretty? What possesses you men? Come! I am better-looking than she is! You men are fools. And besides, my friend, I have spoiled you. Go to her and ask her to caress your pride, to tickle your vanity, to flatter and to serve your ambitions,—for you are ambitious: I know you! Ah, M. Mauperin, one can only find that once in a lifetime! And it is only women of my age, old women like me,—do you hear me?—who love the future of the people whom they love! You were not my lover, you were my grandchild!» And at this word, her voice sounded as though it came from the bottom of her heart. Then immediately changing her tone—«But don't be foolish! I tell you you don't really love my daughter; it is not true: she is rich!»

« O madame! »

« Good gracious! there are lots of people. They have been pointed out to me. It pays sometimes to begin with the mother and finish with the dower. And a million, you know, will gild a good many pills. »

« Speak lower, I implore — for your own sake: some one has just opened a window. »

« Calmness is very fine, M. Mauperin, very fine, very fine, » repeated Madame Bourjot. And her low, hissing voice seemed to stifle her.

Clouds were scudding across the sky, and passed over the moon looking like huge bats' wings. Madame Bourjot gazed fixedly into the darkness, straight in front of her. Her elbows resting on her knees, her weight thrown on to her heels, she was beating with the points of her satin shoes the gravel of the path. After a few minutes she sat upright, stretched out her arms two or three times wildly and as though but half awake; then, hastily and with jerks, she pushed her hand down between her gown and her waistband, pressing her hand against the ribbon as though she would break it. Then she rose and began to walk. Henry followed her.

« I intend, sir, that we shall never see each other again, » she said to him, without turning round.

As they passed near the basin, she handed him her handkerchief: —

« Wet that for me. »

Henry put one knee on the margin and gave her back the lace, which he had moistened. She laid it on her forehead and on her eyes. « Now let us go in, » she said; « give me your arm. »

« Oh, dear madame, what courage! » said Madame Mauperin, going to meet Madame Bourjot as she entered; « but it is unwise of you. Let me order your carriage. »

« On no account, » answered Madame Bourjot hastily: « I thank you. I promised that I would sing for you, I think. I am going to sing. »

And Madame Bourjot advanced to the piano, graceful and valiant, with the heroic smile on her face wherewith the actors of society hide from the public the tears that they shed within themselves, and the wounds which are only known to their own hearts.

EDMUND GOSSE

(1849–)

Edmund William Gosse, or Edmund Gosse, to give him the name he has of late years adopted, is a Londoner, the son of P. H. Gosse, an English zoölogist of repute. His education did not embrace the collegiate training, but he was brought up amid cultured surroundings, read largely, and when but eighteen was appointed an assistant librarian in the British Museum, at the age of twenty-six receiving the position of translator to the Board of Trade. Gosse is a good example of the cultivated man of letters who fitted himself thoroughly for his profession, though lacking the formal scholastic drill of the university.

He began as a very young man to write for the leading English periodicals, contributing papers and occasional poems to the Saturday Review, Academy, and Cornhill Magazine, and soon gaining critical recognition. In 1872 and 1874 he traveled in Scandinavia and Holland, making literary studies which bore fruit in one of his best critical works. He made his literary bow when twenty-one with the volume 'Madrigals, Songs, and Sonnets' (1870), which was well received, winning praise from Tennyson. His essential qualities as a verse-writer appear in it: elegance and care of workmanship, close study of nature, felicity in phrasing, and a marked tendency to draw on literary culture for subject and reference. Other works of poetry, 'On Viol and Flute' (1873), 'New Poems' (1879), 'Firdausī in Exile' (1885), 'In Russet and Gold' (1894), with the dramas 'King Erik' (1876) and 'The Unknown Lover' (1878), show an increasingly firm technique and a broadening of outlook, with some loss of the happy singing quality which characterized the first volume. Gosse as a poet may be described as a lyrist with attractive descriptive powers. Together with his fellow poets Lang and Dobson, he revived in English verse the old French metrical forms, such as the roundel, triolet, and ballade, and he has been very receptive to the new in literary form and thought, while keeping a firm grip on the classic models.

As an essayist, Gosse is one of the most accomplished and agreeable of modern English writers; he has comprehensive culture and catholic sympathy, and commands a picturesque style, graceful and rich without being florid. His 'Studies in the Literature of Northern Europe' (1879) introduced Ibsen and other little-known foreign writers to British readers.

Gosse has been a thorough student of English literature prior to the nineteenth century, and has made a specialty of the literary history of the eighteenth century, his series of books in this field including—‹Seventeenth-Century Studies› (1883), ‹From Shakespeare to Pope› (1885), ‹The Literature of the Eighteenth Century› (1889), ‹The Jacobean Poets› (1894), to which may be added the volume of contemporaneous studies ‹Critical Kit-Kats› (1896). Some of these books are based on the lectures delivered by Gosse as Clark Lecturer at Trinity College, Cambridge. He has also written biographies of Sir Walter Raleigh and Congreve, and his ‹Life of Thomas Gray› (1882) and ‹Works of Thomas Gray› (1884) comprise the best edition and setting-forth of that poet. In such labors as that of the editing of Heinemann's ‹International Library,› his influence has been salutary in the popularization of the best literature of the world. His interest in Ibsen led him to translate, in collaboration with William Archer, the dramatic critic of London, the Norwegian's play ‹The Master Builder.›

Edmund Gosse, as editor, translator, critic, and poet, has done varied and excellent work. Sensitive to many literatures, and to good literature everywhere, he has remained stanchly English in spirit, and has combined scholarship with popular qualities of presentation. He has thus contributed not a little to the furtherance of literature in England.

[The poems are all taken from ‹On Viol and Flute,› published by Henry Holt & Co., New York.]

FEBRUARY IN ROME

When Roman fields are red with cyclamen,
And in the palace gardens you may find,
Under great leaves and sheltering briony-bind,
Clusters of cream-white violets, oh then
The ruined city of immortal men
Must smile, a little to her fate resigned,
And through her corridors the slow warm wind
Gush harmonies beyond a mortal ken.
Such soft favonian airs upon a flute,
Such shadowy censers burning live perfume,
Shall lead the mystic city to her tomb;
Nor flowerless springs, nor autumns without fruit,
Nor summer mornings when the winds are mute,
Trouble her soul till Rome be no more Rome.

DESIDERIUM

Sit there for ever, dear, and lean
  In marble as in fleeting flesh,
Above the tall gray reeds that screen
  The river when the breeze is fresh;
For ever let the morning light
Stream down that forehead broad and white,
And round that cheek for my delight.

Already that flushed moment grows
  So dark, so distant; through the ranks
Of scented reed the river flows,
  Still murmuring to its willowy banks;
But we can never hope to share
Again that rapture fond and rare,
Unless you turn immortal there.

There is no other way to hold
  These webs of mingled joy and pain;
Like gossamer their threads enfold
  The journeying heart without a strain,—
Then break, and pass in cloud or dew,
And while the ecstatic soul goes through,
Are withered in the parching blue.

Hold, Time, a little while thy glass,
  And Youth, fold up those peacock wings!
More rapture fills the years that pass
  Than any hope the future brings;
Some for to-morrow rashly pray,
And some desire to hold to-day,
But I am sick for yesterday.

Since yesterday the hills were blue
  That shall be gray for evermore,
And the fair sunset was shot through
  With color never seen before!
Tyrannic Love smiled yesterday,
And lost the terrors of his sway,
But is a god again to-day.

Ah, who will give us back the past?
  Ah woe, that youth should love to be
Like this swift Thames that speeds so fast,
  And is so fain to find the sea,—

That leaves this maze of shadow and sleep,
These creeks down which blown blossoms creep,
For breakers of the homeless deep.

Then sit for ever, dear, in stone,
   As when you turned with half a smile,
And I will haunt this islet lone,
   And with a dream my tears beguile;
And in my reverie forget
That stars and suns were made to set;
That love grows cold, or eyes are wet.

LYING IN THE GRASS

Between two golden tufts of summer grass,
I see the world through hot air as through glass,
And by my face sweet lights and colors pass.

Before me dark against the fading sky,
I watch three mowers mowing, as I lie:
With brawny arms they sweep in harmony.

Brown English faces by the sun burnt red,
Rich glowing color on bare throat and head,—
My heart would leap to watch them, were I dead!

And in my strong young living as I lie,
I seem to move with them in harmony,—
A fourth is mowing, and the fourth am I.

The music of the scythes that glide and leap,
The young men whistling as their great arms sweep,
And all the perfume and sweet sense of sleep,

The weary butterflies that droop their wings,
The dreamy nightingale that hardly sings,
And all the lassitude of happy things,

Is mingling with the warm and pulsing blood,
That gushes through my veins a languid flood,
And feeds my spirit as the sap a bud.

Behind the mowers, on the amber air,
A dark-green beech wood rises, still and fair,
A white path winding up it like a stair.

And see that girl, with pitcher on her head,
And clean white apron on her gown of red,—
Her evensong of love is but half said:

She waits the youngest mower. Now he goes;
Her cheeks are redder than a wild blush-rose;
They climb up where the deepest shadows close.

But though they pass, and vanish, I am there.
I watch his rough hands meet beneath her hair;
Their broken speech sounds sweet to me like prayer.

Ah! now the rosy children come to play,
And romp and struggle with the new-mown hay;
Their clear, high voices sound from far away.

They know so little why the world is sad;
They dig themselves warm graves, and yet are glad;
Their muffled screams and laughter make me mad!

I long to go and play among them there;
Unseen, like wind, to take them by the hair,
And gently make their rosy cheeks more fair.

The happy children! full of frank surprise,
And sudden whims and innocent ecstasies;
What Godhead sparkles from their liquid eyes!

No wonder round those urns of mingled clays
That Tuscan potters fashioned in old days,
And colored like the torrid earth ablaze,

We find the little gods and Loves portrayed,
Through ancient forests wandering undismayed,
And fluting hymns of pleasure unafraid.

They knew, as I do now, what keen delight
A strong man feels to watch the tender flight
Of little children playing in his sight.

I do not hunger for a well-stored mind;
I only wish to live my life, and find
My heart in unison with all mankind.

My life is like the single dewy star
That trembles on the horizon's primrose bar,—
A microcosm where all things living are.

And if, among the noiseless grasses, Death
Should come behind and take away my breath,
I should not rise as one who sorroweth;

For I should pass, but all the world would be
Full of desire and young delight and glee,—
And why should men be sad through loss of me?

The light is flying; in the silver blue
The young moon shines from her bright window through:
The mowers are all gone, and I go too.

RUDOLF VON GOTTSCHALL

(1823–)

Rudolph von Gottschall was born in Breslau, September 30th, 1823. He was the son of a Prussian artillery officer, and as a lad gave early evidence of extraordinary talent. His father was transferred to the Rhine, and young Gottschall was sent successively to the gymnasiums of Mainz and Coblenz. Even in his school days, and before he entered the university, he had through his cleverness attained a certain degree of eminence. His career at the University of Königsberg, whither he went to pursue the study of jurisprudence, was interrupted by the results attendant upon a youthful ebullition of the spirit of freedom. His sympathy with the revolutionary element was too boldly expressed, and when in 1842 he published 'Lieder der Gegenwart' (Songs of the Present), he found it necessary to leave the university in order to avert impending consequences. In the following year he published 'Censurflüchtlinge' (Fugitives from the Censor), a poem of a kind not in the least likely to conciliate the authorities. He remained for a time with Count Reichenbach in Silesia, and then went to Berlin, where he was allowed to complete his studies. He was however refused the privilege of becoming a university docent, although he had regularly taken his degree of *Dr. Juris.*

R. von Gottschall

He now devoted himself wholly to poetry and general literature. For a while he held the position of stage manager in the theatre of Königsberg, and during this period produced the dramas 'Der Blinde von Alcalá' (The Blind Man of Alcalá: 1846), and 'Lord Byron in Italien' (Lord Byron in Italy: 1848). After leaving Königsberg he frequently changed his residence, living in Hamburg and Breslau, and later in Posen, where in 1852 he was editor of a newspaper. In 1853 he went to Italy, and after his return he settled in Leipzig. Here he definitely established himself, and undertook the editing of Blätter für Litterarische Unterhaltung (Leaves for Literary Amusement), and also of the monthly periodical Unsere Zeit (Our Time). He wrote profusely, and exerted an appreciable influence upon contemporary literature. He was ennobled by the Emperor in 1877.

As a poet and man of letters, Gottschall possesses unusual gifts, and is a writer of most extraordinary activity. His fecundity is astonishing, and the amount of his published work fills many volumes. His versatility is no less remarkable than his productiveness. Dramatist and critic, novelist and poet,—in all his various fields he is never mediocre. Chief among his dramatic works are the tragedies 'Katharina Howard'; 'King Carl XII.'; 'Bernhard of Weimar'; 'Amy Robsart'; 'Arabella Stuart'; and the excellent comedy 'Pitt and Fox.' Of narrative poems the best known are 'Die Göttin, ein Hohes Lied vom Weibe' (The Goddess, a Song of Praise of Woman), 1852; 'Carlo Zeno,' 1854; and 'Sebastopol,' 1856.

He has published numerous volumes of verses which take a worthy rank in the poetry of the time. His first 'Gedichte' (Poems) appeared in 1849; 'Neue Gedichte' (New Poems) in 1858; 'Kriegslieder' (War Songs) in 1870; and 'Janus' and 'Kriegs und Friedens Gedichte' (Poems of War and Peace) in 1873. In his novels he is no less successful, and of these may be mentioned—'Im Banne des Schwarzen Adlers' (In the Ban of the Black Eagle: 1876); 'Welke Blätter' (Withered Leaves: 1878); and 'Das Goldene Kalb' (The Golden Calf: 1880).

It is however chiefly as critic that his power has been most widely exerted, and prominent among the noteworthy productions of later years stand his admirable 'Porträts und Studien' (Portraits and Studies: 1870-71); and 'Die Deutsche Nationallitteratur in der Ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts' (The German National Literature in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century: 1855), continued to the present time in 1892, when the whole appeared as 'The German National Literature of the Nineteenth Century.'

HEINRICH HEINE

From 'Portraits and Studies'

About no recent poet has so much been said and sung as about Heinrich Heine. The youngest writer, who for the first time tries his pen, does not neglect to sketch with uncertain outlines the portrait of this poet; and the oldest sour-tempered professor of literature, who turns his back upon the efforts of the present with the most distinguished disapproval, lets fall on the picture a few rays of light, in order to prove the degeneration of modern literature in the Mephistophelean features of this its chief. Heine's songs are everywhere at home. They are to be found upon the music rack of the piano, in the school-books, in the slender libraries of minor officers and young clerks. However difficult it may be to compile an *editio castigata* of his poems, every age, every generation has selected from among them that which has delighted it. Citations from Heine, winged words in verse and prose, buzz through the air of the century like a swarm of insects: splendid butterflies with gayly glistening wings, beautiful day moths and ghostly night moths, tormenting gnats, and bees armed with evil stings. Heine's works are canonical books for the intellectual, who season their judgments with citations from this poet, model their conversation on his style, interpret him, expand the germ cell of his wit to a whole fabric of clever developments. Even if he is not a companion on the way through life, like great German poets, and smaller Brahmins who for every day of our house-and-life calendar give us an aphorism on the road, there are nevertheless, in the lives of most modern men, moods with which Heine's verse harmonize with wondrous sympathy; moments in which the intimacy with this poet is greater than the friendship, even if this be of longer duration, with our classic poets.

It is apparently idle to attempt to say anything new of so much discussed a singer of modern times, since testimony favorable and unfavorable has been drained to exhaustion by friend and foe. Who does not know Heine,—or rather, who does not believe that he knows him? for, as is immediately to be added, acquaintance with this poet extends really only to a few of his songs, and to the complete picture which is delivered over ready-made from one history of literature into another. Nothing, however, is more perilous and more fatal than literary tradition! Not merely decrees and laws pass along by inheritance, like a constitutional infirmity, but literary judgments too. They form at last a subject of instruction like any other; a dead piece of furniture in the spiritual housekeeping, which, like everything that has been learned, is set as completed to one side. We know enough of this sort of fixed pictures, which at last pass along onward as the fixed ideas of a whole epoch, until a later unprejudiced investigation dissolves this rigid-grown wisdom, sets it to flowing, and forms out of a new mixture of its elements a new and more truthful portrait.

It is not to be affirmed however that Heine's picture, as it stands fixed and finished in the literature and the opinion of the present, is mistaken and withdrawn. It is dead, like every picture; there is lacking the living, changing play of features. We have of Heine only one picture before us; of our great poets several. Goethe in his «storm and stress,» in Frankfurt, Strassburg, and Wetzlar,—the ardent lover of a Friedrike of Sesenheim, the handsome, joyous youth, is different in our minds from the stiff and formal Weimar minister; the youthful Apollo different from the Olympic Jupiter. There lies a young development between, that we feel and are curious to know. It is similar with Schiller. The poet of the 'Robbers' with its motto *In tyrannos*, the fugitive from the military school; and the Jena professor, the Weimar court councilor who wrote 'The Homage of the Arts,'—are two different portraits.

But Heine is to our view always the same, always the representative of humor with «a laughing tear» in his escutcheon, always the poetic anomaly, coquetting with his pain and scoffing it away. Young or old, well or ill, we do not know him different.

And yet this poet too had a development, upon which at different times different influences worked. . . .

The first epoch in this course of development may be called the «youthful»; the 'Travel Pictures' and the lyrics contained in it form its brilliant conclusion. This is no storm-and-stress period in the way that, as Schiller and Goethe passed through it, completed works first issued under its clarifying influence. On the contrary, it is characteristic of Heine that we have to thank this youthful epoch for his best and most peculiarly national poems. The wantonness and the sorrows of this youth, in their piquant mixture, created these songs permeated by the breath of original talent, whose physiognomy, more than all that follow later, bears the mark of the kind and manner peculiar to Heine, and which for a long time exercised in our literature through a countless host of imitators an almost epidemic effect. But these lyric pearls, which in their purity and their crystalline polish are a lasting adornment of his poet's crown, and belong to the lyric treasures of our national literature, were also gathered in his first youthful epoch, when he still dived down into the depths of life in the diving-bell of romanticism.

Although Heinrich Heine asserted of himself that he belonged to the «first men of the century,» since he was born in the middle of New Year's night, 1800, more exact investigation has nevertheless shown that truth is here sacrificed to a witticism. Heine is still a child of the eighteenth century, by whose most predominant thoughts his work too is influenced, and with whose European coryphæus, Voltaire, he has an undeniable relationship. He was born, as Strodtmann proves, on the 13th of December, 1799, in Düsseldorf. His father was a plain cloth-merchant; his mother, of the family Von Geldern, the daughter of a physician of repute. The opinion, however, that Heine was the fruit of a Jewish-Christian marriage, is erroneous. The family Von Geldern belonged to the orthodox Jewish confession. One of its early members, according to family tradition, although he was a Jew, had received the patent of nobility from one of the prince electors of Jülich-Kleve-Berg, on account of a service accorded him. As, moreover, Schiller's and Goethe's mothers worked upon their sons an appreciable educational influence, so was this also the case with Heine's mother, who is described as a pupil of Rousseau and an adorer of Goethe's elegies, and thus reached far out beyond the measure of the bourgeois conditions in which she lived. . . .

That which however worked upon his youthful spirit, upon his whole poetical manner, was the French sovereignty in the Rhinelands at the time of his childhood and youth. The Grand Duchy of Berg, to which Düsseldorf belonged, was ruled in the French manner; a manner which, apart from the violent conscriptions, when compared with the Roman imperial periwig style had great advantages, and in particular granted to Jews complete equal rights with Christians, since the revolutionary principle of equality had outlived the destruction of freedom. Thus the Jews in Düsseldorf in their greater part were French sympathizers, and Heine's father too was an ardent adherent of the new régime. This as a matter of course could not remain without influence upon the son, so much the less as he had French instruction at the lyceum. A vein of the lively French blood is unmistakable in his works. It drew him later on to Paris, where he made the martyr stations of his last years. And of all recent German poets, Heinrich Heine is the best known in France, better known even than our classic poets; for the French feel this vein of related blood. . . .

From his youth springs, too, Heine's enthusiasm for the great Napoleon, which however he has never transmitted to the successors of the *idées Napoléoniennes*. The thirteen-year-old pupil of the gymnasium saw the Emperor in the year 1811, and then again in May 1812; and later on in the 'Book Legrand' of the 'Travel Pictures' he strikes up the following dithyrambic, which, as is always the case with Heine where the great Cæsar is concerned, tones forth pure and full, with genuine poetic swing, without those dissonances in which his inmost feelings often flow. «What feelings came over me,» he exclaims, «when I saw him himself, with my own highly favored eyes, him himself, Hosanna, the Emperor! It was in the avenue of the Court garden in Düsseldorf. As I pushed myself through the gaping people, I thought of his deeds and his battles, and my heart beat the general march — and nevertheless, I thought at the same time of the police regulation that no one under a penalty of five thalers should ride through the middle of the avenue. And the Emperor rode quietly through the middle of the avenue; no policeman opposed him. Behind him, his suite rode proudly on snorting horses and loaded with gold and jewels, the trumpets sounded, and the people shouted with a thousand voices, 'Long live the Emperor!'» To this enthusiasm for Napoleon, Heine not long afterward gave a poetic setting in the ballad 'The Two Grenadiers.' . . .

The Napoleonic remembrances of his youth, which retained that unfading freshness and enthusiasm that are wont to belong to all youthful remembrances, were of vital influence upon Heine's later position in literature; they formed a balance over against the romantic tendency, and hindered him from being drawn into it. Precisely in that epoch when the beautiful patriotism of the Wars of Liberation went over into the weaker feeling of the time of the restoration, and romanticism, grown over-devout, in part abandoned itself to externals, in part became a centre of reactionary efforts, Heine let this Napoleonic lightning play on the sultry heavens of literature, in the most daring opposition to the ruling disposition of the time and a school of poetry from which he himself had proceeded; while he declared war upon its followers. However greatly he imperiled his reputation as a German patriot through these hosannas offered to the hereditary enemy, just as little was it to be construed amiss that the remembrance of historical achievements, and of those principles of the Revolution which even the Napoleonic despotism must represent, were a salutary ventilation in the miasmic atmosphere of the continually decreasing circle which at that time described German literature. In the prose of Heine, which like Béranger glorified Cæsar, slumbered the first germs of the political lyric, which led again out of the moonlit magic realm of romanticism into the sunny day of history. . . .

A hopeless youthful love for a charming Hamburg maiden was the Muse of the Heine lyric, whose escutcheon has for a symbol «the laughing tear.» With the simplicity of Herodotus the poet himself relates the fact, the experience, in the well-known poem with the final strophe:—

«It is an ancient story,
But still 'tis ever new:
To whomsoe'er it happens
His heart is broken too.»

We comprehend from biographical facts the inner genesis of the Heine lyric. Heine was in the position of Werther, but a Werther was for the nineteenth century an anomaly; a lyric of this sort in yellow nankeen breeches would have travestied itself. The content of the range of thought, the circle of world-shaping efforts, had so expanded itself since the French Revolution that a complete dissolution into sentimental extravagance had become an impossibility. The justification of the sentiment was not to be denied; but it must not be regarded as the highest, as the life-determining element. It needed a rectification which should again rescue the freedom of the spirit. Humor alone could accomplish Munchausen's feat, and draw itself by its own hair out of the morass. Heine expressed his feelings with genuine warmth; he formed them into drawn pictures and visions; but then he placed himself on the defensive against them. He is the modern Werther, who instead of loading his pistol with a ball, loads it with humor. Artistic harmony suffered under this triumph of spiritual freedom; but that which appeared in his imitators as voluntary quibbling came from Heine of inner necessity. The subject of his first songs is the necessary expression of a struggle between feeling and spirit, between the often visionary dream life of a sentiment and self-consciousness, soaring free out over the world, which adjudged absorption in a single feeling as one-sided and unjustified. Later on, to be sure, these subjects of youthful inspiration became in Heine himself a satiric-humoristic manner, which regarded as a model worked much evil in literature. In addition to personal necessity through one's own experience, there was for a genius such as Heine's also a literary necessity, which lay in the development of our literature in that epoch. It was the Indian Summer of romanticism, whose cobwebs at this time flew over the stubble of our poetry. The vigorous onset of the lyricists of the Wars of Liberation had again grown lame; people reveled in the album sentiments of Tiedge and Mahlmann; the spectres of Amadeus Hoffmann and the lovely high-born maidens of knight Fouqué were regarded then as the noblest creations of German fantasy. Less chosen spirits, that is to say, the entire great reading public of the German nation, which ever felt toward its immortals a certain aversion, refreshed itself with the lukewarm water of the poetry of Clauren, from out of which, instead of the Venus Anadyomene, appear a Mimili and other maiden forms, pretty, but drawn with a stuffed-out plasticism. On the stage reigned the «fate tragedies» upon whose lyre the strings were wont to break even in the first scene, and whose ghosts slipped silently over all the German boards. In a word, spirits controlled the poetry of the time more than spirit.

Heine however was a genuine knight of the spirit, and even if he conjured up his lyric spectres, he demanded no serious belief in them — they were dissolving pictures of mist; and if he followed his overflowing feelings, the mawkish sentiments of romanticism occurred to him and disgusted him with the extravagant expression of his love pain, and he mocked himself, the time, and the literature,— dissolved the sweet accords in glaring dissonances, so that they should not be in tune with the sentimental street songs of the poets of the day. In these outer and inner reasons lie the justification and the success of the lyric poetry of Heine. It designates an act of self-consciousness of the German spirit, which courageously lifts itself up out of idle love complainings and fantastic dream life, and at the same time mocks them both. An original talent like Heine's was needed to give to the derided sentiment such a transporting magic, to the derision itself such an Attic grace, that the sphinx of his poetry, with the beautiful face and the rending claws, always produced the impression of a work of art. The signification in literary history of these songs of Heine is not to be underestimated. They indicate the dissolution of romanticism, and with them begins the era of modern German poetry.

Translated for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature,› by William H. Carpenter

JOHN GOWER

(1325?-1408)

Since Caxton, the first printer of ‹Confessio Amantis› (The Confession of a Lover), described Gower as a «squyer borne in Walys in the tyme of Kyng Richard the second,» there has been a diversity of opinion about his birthplace, and he has been classed variously with prosperous Gowers until of late, when the county assigned to him is Kent. His birth-year is placed approximately at 1325. We know nothing of his early life and education. It has been guessed that he went to Oxford, and afterwards traveled in the troubled kingdom of France. Such a course might have been followed by a man of his estate. He had means, for English property records (in this instance the rolls of Chancery, the parchment foundation of English society) still preserve deeds of his holdings in Kent and Essex and elsewhere.

John Gower

His life lay along with that of Chaucer's, in the time when Edward III. and his son the Black Prince were carrying war into France, and the English Parliament were taking pay in plain speaking for what they granted in supplies, and wresting at the same time promises of reform from the royal hand. But Gower and Chaucer were not only contemporaries: they were of like pursuit, tastes, and residence; they were friends; and when Chaucer under Richard II., the grandson and successor of Edward, went to France upon the mission of which Froissart speaks, he named John Gower as one of his two attorneys while he should be away. Notice of Gower's marriage to Agnes Groundolf late in life — in 1397 — is still preserved. Three years after this he became blind, — it was the year 1400, in which Chaucer died, — and in 1408 he died.

«The infirm poet,» says Morley, «spent the evening of his life at St. Mary Overies [St. Mary-over-the-River], in retirement from all worldly affairs except pious and liberal support of the advancing building works in the priory, and in the church now known as St. Saviour's [Southwark], to which he bequeathed his body. His will, made not long before death, bequeathed his soul to God, his body to be buried in St. Mary Overies. The poet bequeathed also 13*s.* 4*d.* to each of the four parish churches of Southwark for ornaments and lights, besides 6*s.* 8*d.* for prayers to each of their curates. It is not less characteristic that he left also 40*s.* for prayers to the master of St. Thomas's Hospital, and, still for prayers, 6*s.* 8*d.* to each of its priests, 3*s.* 4*d.* to each Sister in the hospital, twenty pence to each nurse of the infirm there, and to each of the infirm twelve pence. There were similar bequests to St. Thomas Elsing Spital, a priory and hospital that stood where now stands Sion College. St. Thomas Elsing Spital, founded in 1329 by William Elsing, was especially commended to the sympathies of the blind old poet, as it consisted of a college for a warden, four priests, and two clerks, who had care of one hundred old, blind, and poor persons of both sexes, preference being given to blind, paralytic, and disabled priests. Like legacies were bequeathed also to Bedlam-without-Bishopsgate, and to St. Mary's Hospital, Westminster. Also there were bequests of ten shillings to each of the leper-nurses. Two robes (one of white silk, the other of blue baudekin,—a costly stuff with web of gold and woof of silk), also a new dish and chalice, and a new missal, were bequeathed to the perpetual service of the altar of the chapel of St. John the Baptist, in which his body was to be buried. To the prior and convent he left a great book, a 'Martyrology,' which had been composed and written for them at his expense. To his wife Agnes he left a hundred pounds, three cups, one coverlet, two salt-cellars, and a dozen silver spoons; also all his beds and chests, with the furnishings of hall, pantry, and kitchen; also a chalice and robe for the altar of the chapel of their house; and she was to have for life all rents due to him from his manors of Southwell (in Nottingham) and Moulton (in Suffolk)."

His wife was one of his executors. The will is still preserved at Lambeth Palace.

Gower's tomb and monument may also still be seen at St. Saviour's, where the description Berthelet gave of them in 1532 is, aside from the deadening of the paintings, true:—"Somewhat after the olde ffashion he lyeth ryght sumptuously buryed, with a garland on his head, in token that he in his lyfe dayes flouryshed freshely in literature and science." The head of his stone effigy lies upon three volumes representing Gower's three great works; the hair falls in long curls; the robe is closely buttoned to the feet, which rest upon a lion, and the neck is encircled with a collar, from which a chain held a small swan, the badge of Henry IV. "Besyde on the wall where as he lyeth," continues Berthelet, "there be peynted three virgins, with crownes on theyr heades; one of the which is written *Charitie*, and she holdeth this devise in her hande:—

'En toy qui fitz de Dieu le Pere
Sauve soit que gist souz cest piere.'

(In thee, who art Son of God the Father,
Be he saved who lieth under this stone.)

«The second is wrytten *Mercye*, which holdeth in her hande this devise:—

‹O bone Jesu fait ta mercy
Al alme dont le corps gist icy.›

(O good Jesus, grant thy mercy
To the soul whose body lies here.)

«The thyrde of them is wrytten *Pity*, which holdeth in her hand this devise:—

‹Pur ta pite, Jesu regarde,
Et met cest alme en sauve garde.›»

(For thy pity, Jesus, see;
And take this soul in thy safe guard.)

The monument was repaired in 1615, 1764, and 1830.

The three works which pillow the head of the effigy indicate Gower's ‹Speculum Meditantis› (The Looking-Glass of One Meditating), which the poet wrote in French; the ‹Vox Clamantis› (The Voice of One Crying), in Latin; and the ‹Confessio Amantis,› in English. It should be remembered in noting this mixture of tongues, that in Gower's early life the English had no national speech. The court, Parliament, nobles, and the courts of law used French; the Church held its service in Latin; while the inhabitants of Anglo-Saxon blood clung to the language of their fathers, which they had modified by additions from the Norman tongue. It was not until 1362 that Parliament was opened by a speech in English. «There is,» says Dr. Pauli, «no better illustration of the singular transition to the English language than a short enumeration and description of Gower's writings.» Of the ‹Speculum Meditantis,› a treatise in ten books on the duties of married life, no copy is known to exist. The ‹Vox Clamantis› was the voice of the poet, singing in Latin elegiac of the terrible evils which led to the rise of the commons and their march to London under Wat Tyler and Jack Straw in 1381. It is doubtless a true picture of the excesses and miseries of the day. The remedy, the poet says, is in reform—right living and love of England. Simony in the prelates, avarice and drunkenness in the libidinous priests, wealth and luxury in the mendicant orders, miscarrying of justice in the courts, enrichment of individuals by excessive taxes,—these are the subjects of the voice crying in the wilderness.

Gower's greatest work, however, is the ‹Confessio Amantis.› In form it is a dialogue between a lover and his confessor, who is a priest of Venus. In substance it is a setting-forth, with moralizings which are at times touching and elevated, of one hundred and twelve different stories, from sources so different as the Bible, Ovid, Josephus, the 'Gesta Romanorum,' Valerius Maximus, Statius, Boccaccio, etc. Thirty thousand eight-syllabled rhymed lines make up the work. There are different versions. The first was dedicated to Richard II., and the second to his successor, Henry of Lancaster. Besides these large works, a number of French ballades, and also English and Latin short poems, are preserved. «They have real and intrinsic merit,» says Todd: «they are tender, pathetic, and poetical, and place our old poet Gower in a more advantageous point of view than that in which he has heretofore been usually seen.»

Estimates of Gower's writings are various; but even his most hostile judges admit the pertinence of the epithet with which Chaucer hails him in his dedication of 'Troilus and Creseide':—

> «O morall Gower, this bookè I direct
> To thee and to the philosophicall Strode,
> To vouchsafè there need is to correct
> Of your benignities and zealès good.»

Then Skelton the laureate, in his long song upon the death of Philip Sparrow (which recalls the exquisite gem of Catullus in a like threnody), takes occasion to say:—

> «Gower's englysshè is olde,
> And of no valúe is tolde;
> His mattér is worth gold,
> And worthy to be enrold.»

And again:—

> «Gower that first garnishèd our English rude.»

Old Puttenham also bears this testimony:—«But of them all [the English poets] particularly this is myne opinion, that Chaucer, with Gower, Lidgate, and Harding, for their antiquitie ought to have the first place.»

Taine dismisses him with little more than a fillip, and Lowell, while discoursing appreciatively on Chaucer, says:—

«Gower has positively raised tediousness to the precision of science; he has made dullness an heirloom for the students of our literary history. As you slip to and fro on the frozen levels of his verse, which give no foothold to the mind; as your nervous ear awaits the inevitable recurrence of his rhyme, regularly pertinacious as the tick of an eight-day clock, and reminding you of Wordsworth's

> 'Once more the ass did lengthen out
> The hard dry seesaw of his horrible bray,'

you learn to dread, almost to respect, the powers of this indefatigable man. He is the undertaker of the fair mediæval legend, and his style has the hateful gloss, the seemingly unnatural length, of a coffin.»

Yet hear Morley:—

«To this day we hear among our living countrymen, as was to be heard in Gower's time and long before, the voice passing from man to man, that in spite of admixture with the thousand defects incident to human character, sustains the keynote of our literature, and speaks from the soul of our history the secret of our national success. It is the voice that expresses the persistent instinct of the English mind to find out what is unjust among us and undo it, to find out duty to be done and do it, as God's bidding. . . . In his own Old English or Anglo-Saxon way he tries to put his soul into his work. Thus in the ‹Vox Clamantis› we have heard him asking that the soul of his book, not its form, be looked to; and speaking the truest English in such sentences as that ‹the eye is blind and the ear deaf, that convey nothing down to the heart's depth; and the heart that does not utter what it knows is as a live coal under ashes. If I know little, there may be another whom that little will help. . . . But to the man who believes in God, no power is unattainable if he but rightly feels his work; he ever has enough, whom God increases.› This is the old spirit of Cædmon and of Bede; in which are laid, while the earth lasts, the strong foundations of our literature. It was the strength of such a temper in him that made Gower strong. ‹God knows,› he says again, ‹my wish is to be useful; that is the prayer that directs my labor.› And while he thus touches the root of his country's philosophy, the form of his prayer—that what he has written may be what he would wish it to be—is still a thoroughly sound definition of good English writing. His prayer is that there may be no word of untruth, and that ‹each word may answer to the thing it speaks of, pleasantly and fitly; that he may flatter in it no one, and seek in it no praise above the praise of God.›»

The part of Gower's writing here brought before the reader is the quaintly told and charming story of Petronella, from ‹Liber Primus› of the ‹Confessio.› It may be evidence that all the malediction upon the poet above quoted is not deserved.

The ‹Confessio Amantis› has been edited and collated with the best manuscripts by Dr. Reinhold Pauli (1857). The ‹Vox Clamantis› was printed for the first time in 1850, under the editorship of H. O. Coxe and for the Roxburghe Club. The ‹Balades and Other Poems› are also included in the publication of the Roxburghe Club. Other sources of information regarding Gower are ‹Illustrations of the Lives and Writings of Gower and Chaucer› by Henry J. Todd (1810); Henry Morley's reviews in ‹English Writers›; and various short articles.

PETRONELLA

From the ‹Confessio Amantis›

A KING whilom was yonge and wise,
The which set of his wit great prise.
Of depe ymaginations
And straunge interpretations,
Problemes and demaundès eke
His wisedom was to finde and seke;
Wherof he wolde in sondry wise
Opposen hem that weren wise.
But none of hem it mightè bere
Upon his word to yive answére;[1]
Out taken one, which was a knight:
To him was every thing so light,
That also sone as he hem herde
The kingès wordès he answerde,
What thing the king him axè wolde,
Whereof anone the trouth he tolde.
The king somdele had an envie,
And thought he wolde his wittès plie
To setè some conclusion,
Which shuldè be confusion
Unto this knight, so that the name
And of wisdom the highè fame
Towárd him selfe he woldè winne.
And thus of all his wit withinne
This king began to studie and muse
What straungè matér he might use
The knightès wittès to confounde;
And atè last he hath it founde,
And for the knight anon he sente,
That he shall tellè what he mente.
Upon three points stood the matére,
Of questions as thou shaltè here.
The firstè pointè of all thre
Was this: what thing in his degre
Of all this world hath nedè lest,
And yet men helpe it allthermest.
The second is: what moste is worth
And of costáge is lest put forth.

---

[1] No one could solve his puzzles.

The thrid is: which is of most cost,
And lest is worth, and goth to lost.
The king these thre demaundès axeth.
To the knight this law he taxeth:
That he shall gone, and comen ayein
The thriddè weke, and tell him pleine
To every point, what it amounteth.
And if so be that he miscounteth
To make in his answére a faile,
There shall none other thinge availe,
The king saith, but he shall be dede
And lese his goodès and his hede.
This knight was sory of this thinge,
And wolde excuse him to the kinge;
But he ne wolde him nought forbere,
And thus the knight of his answére
Goth home to take avisement.
But after his entendement
The more he cast his wit about,
The more he stant thereof in doubte.
Tho[1] wist he well the kingès herte,
That he the deth ne shulde asterte,[2]
And suche a sorroe to him hath take
That gladship he hath all forsake.
He thought first upon his life,
And after that upon his wife,
Upon his children eke also,
Of whichè he had doughteres two.
The yongest of hem had of age
Fourtene yere, and of visage
She was right faire, and of stature
Lich to an hevenlich figure,
And of manér and goodly speche,
Though men wolde all landès seche,
They shulden nought have founde her like.
She sigh[3] her fader sorroe and sike,[4]
And wist nought the causè why.
So cam she to him prively,
And that was wher he made his mone
Within a gardin all him one.[5]
Upon her knees she gan down falle
With humble herte, and to him calle

---

[1] For.
[2] Escape.
[3] Saw.
[4] Sigh.
[5] Own.

And saidè:—«O good fader dere,
Why makè ye thus hevy chere,[1]
And I wot nothinge how it is?
And well ye knowè, fader, this,
What ádventurè that you felle
Ye might it saufly to me telle;
For I have oftè herd you saide,
That ye such truste have on me laide,
That to my suster ne to my brother
In all this worlde ne to none other
Ye durstè telle a privete
So well, my fader, as to me.
Forthy,[2] my fader, I you praie
Ne casteth nought that hert[3] awaie,
For I am she that woldè kepe
Your honour.» And with that to wepe
Her eye may nought be forbore;[4]
She wisheth for to ben unbore,[5]
Er[6] that her fader so mistriste
To tellen her of that he wiste.
And ever among mercy[7] she cride,
That he ne shulde his counseil hide
From her, that so wolde him good
And was so nigh flesshe and blood.
So that with weping, atè laste
His chere upon his childe he caste,
And sorroefully to that she praide[8]
He tolde his tale, and thus he saide:—
«The sorroe, doughter, which I make
Is nought all only for my sake,
But for the bothe and for you alle.
For suche a chaunce is me befalle,
That I shall er this thriddè day
Lese all that ever I lesè may,
My life and all my good therto.
Therefore it is I sorroe so.»
  «What is the cause, alas,» quod she,
«My fader, that ye shulden be
Dede and destruied in suche a wise?»

---

[1] Care.
[2] Therefore.
[3] Heart.
[4] Cannot endure it.
[5] Unborn.
[6] Ere.
[7] In the midst of pity (for him).
[8] In answer to her prayer.

And he began the points devise,
Which as the king tolde him by mouthe,
And said her pleinly, that he couthe
Answeren to no point of this.
And she, that hereth howe it is,
Her counseil yaf[1] and saide tho[2]:—
«My fader, sithen it is so,
That ye can se none other weie,
But that ye must nedès deie,
I wolde pray you of o[3] thinge,—
Let me go with you to the kinge,
And ye shall make him understonde,
How ye, my wittès for to fonde,
Have laid your answere upon me,
And telleth him in such degre
Upon my worde ye wol abide
To life or deth, what so betide.
For yet perchaunce I may purchace
With some good word the kingès grace,
Your life and eke your good to save.
For oftè shall a woman have
Thing, whiche a man may nought areche.»
The fader herd his doughters speche,
And thought there was no reson in,
And sigh his ownè life to winne
He couthè done himself no cure.[4]
So better him thought in àventure
To put his life and all his good,
Than in the manner as it stood,
His life incertein for to lese.
And thus thenkend he gan to chese
To do the counseil of this maid,
And toke the purpose which she said.
The day was comen, and forth they gone;
Unto the court they come anone,
Where as the kinge in his jugement
Was set and hath this knight assent.
Arraièd in her bestè wise,
This maiden with her wordès wise
Her fader leddè by the honde
Into the place,[5] where he fonde

---

[1] Gave. [2] Thus. [3] One.

[4] Saw that he could do nothing to save his own life.

[5] Palace.

The king with other which he wolde;
And to the king knelend he tolde
As he enformèd was to-fore,
And praith the king, that he therfore
His doughters wordès woldè take;
And saith, that he woll undertake
Upon her wordès for to stonde.
Tho was ther great merveile on honde,
That he, which was so wise a knight,
His life upon so yonge a wight
Besettè wolde in jeopartie,
And many it helden for folie.
But at the lastè, netheles,
The king commaundeth ben in pees,
And to this maide he cast his chere,[1]
And saide he wolde her talè here,
And bad her speke; and she began:—
  « My legè lord, so as I can,»
Quod she, « the pointès which I herde,
They shull of reson ben answerde.
The first I understonde is this:
What thinge of all the worlde it is,
Which men most helpe and hath lest nede.
My legè lord, this wolde I rede:
The erthe it is, which evermo
With mannès labour is bego
As well in winter as in maie.
The mannès honde doth what he may
To helpe it forth and make it riche,
And forthy men it delve and diche,
And even it with strength of plough,
Wher it hath of him self inough
So that his nede is atè leste.
For every man, birdè, and beste
Of flour and gras and roote and rinde
And every thing by way of kinde
Shall sterve, and erthe it shall become
As it was out of erthè nome,[2]
It shall be therthe torne ayein.[3]
And thus I may by reson sein
That erthè is the most nedeles
And most men helpe it netheles;

---

[1] Turned his attention.

[2] Taken.

[3] Shall turn thereto again.

So that, my lord, touchend of this
I have answerde how that it is.
That other point I understood,
Which most is worth, and most is good,
And costeth lest a man to kepe:
My lorde, if ye woll takè kepe,[1]
I say it is humilitè,
Through whichè the high Trinitè
As for desertè of pure love
Unto Mariè from above,
Of that he knewe her humble entente,
His ownè Sone adown he sente
Above all other, and her he chese
For that vertu, which bodeth pees.
So that I may by reson calle
Humilitè most worthe of alle,
And lest it costeth to mainteine
In all the worlde, as it is seine.
For who that hath humblesse on honde,
He bringeth no werres into londe,
For he desireth for the best
To setten every man in reste.
Thus with your highè reverence
Me thenketh that this evidence
As to this point is suffisaunt.
And touchend of the remenaunt,
Which is the thridde of your axinges,
What lest is worth of allè thinges,
And costeth most, I telle it pride,
Which may nought in the heven abide.
For Lucifer with hem that felle
Bar pridè with him into helle.
There was pride of to grete cost
Whan he for pride hath heven lost;
And after that in Paradise
Adam for pridè lost his prise
In middel-erth. And eke also
Pride is the cause of allè wo,
That all the world ne may suffice
To staunche of pridè the reprise.
Pride is the heved[2] of all sinne,
Which wasteth all and may nought winne;

---

[1] Heed.

[2] Head.

Pride is of every mis[1] the pricke[2];
Pride is the worstè of all wicke,
And costeth most and lest is worth
In placè where he hath his forth.
   Thus have I said that I woll say
Of min answére, and to you pray,
My legè lorde, of your office,
That ye such grace and suche justice
Ordeignè for my fader here,
That after this, whan men it here,
The world therof may spekè good."
   The king, which reson understood,
And hath all herde how she hath said,
Was inly glad, and so well paid,
That all his wrath is over go.
And he began to lokè tho
Upon this maiden in the face,
In which he found so mochel grace,
That all his prise on her he laide
In audience, and thus he saide:—
   "My fairè maidè, well the[3] be
Of thin answére, and eke of the
Me liketh well, and as thou wilte,
Foryivè be thy faders gilte.
And if thou were of such lignage,
That thou to me were of parage,
And that thy fader were a pere,
As he is now a bachelere,
So siker as I have a life,
Thou sholdest thannè be my wife.
But this I saiè netheles,
That I woll shapè thin encrese;
What worldès good that thou wolt crave
Are of my yift, and thou shalt have."
   And she the king with wordès wise,
Knelende, thanketh in this wise:—
   "My legè lord, god mot you quite.[4]
My fader here hath but a lite
Of warison,[5] and that he wende
Had all be[6] lost, but now amende
He may well through you noble grace."

---

[1] Mischief.
[2] Core.
[3] Thee.
[4] May God requite you.
[5] Has had but little reward.
[6] Been.

With that the king right in his place
Anon forth in that freshè hete
An erldome, which than of eschete
Was latè falle into his honde,
Unto this knight with rent and londe
Hath yove, and with his chartre sesed,
And thus was all the noise appesed.
This maiden, which sate on her knees
To-fore the kingès charitees,
Commendeth and saith evermore:—
"My legè lord, right now to-fore
Ye saide, and it is of recorde,
That if my fader were a lorde
And pere unto these other grete,
Ye wolden for nought ellès lette,
That I ne sholdè be your wife.
And thus wote every worthy life
A kingès worde mot nede be holde.
Forthy my lord, if that ye wolde
So great a charitè fulfille,
God wotè it were well my wille.
For he which was a bachelere,
My fader, is now made a pere;
So whan as ever that I cam,
An erlès doughter nowe I am."
This yongè king, which peisèd[1] all
Her beautè and her wit withall,
As he, which was with lovè hente,[2]
Anone therto gaf his assente.
He might nought the place asterte,
That she nis lady of his herte.
So that he toke her to his wife
To holdè, while that he hath life.
And thus the king towárd his knight
Accordeth him, as it is right.
And over this good is to wite[3]
In the cronique as it is write,
This noble kinge, of whom I tolde,
Of Spainè by tho daiès olde
The kingdom had in governaunce,
And as the boke maketh remembraunce,
Alphonsè was his propre name.

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[1] Poised — weighed.
[2] Seized.
[3] Know.

The knight also, if I shall name,
Danz Petro hight, and as men telle,
His doughter wisè Petronelle
Was clepèd, which was full of grace.
And that was sene in thilkè place,
Where she her fader out of tene[1]
Hath brought and made her selfe a quene,
Of that she hath so well desclosed
The points whereof she was opposed.

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[1] Destruction.

ULYSSES S. GRANT.

ULYSSES S. GRANT

(1822–1885)

BY HAMLIN GARLAND

Ulysses Grant was born on the 27th of April, 1822, in a small two-room cabin situated in Point Pleasant, a village in southern Ohio, about forty miles above Cincinnati. His father, Jesse R. Grant, was a powerful, alert, and resolute man, ready of speech and of fair education for the time. His family came from Connecticut, and was of the earliest settlers in New England. Hannah Simpson, his wife, was of strong American stock also. The Simpsons had been residents, for several generations, of southeastern Pennsylvania. The Grants and the Simpsons had been redoubtable warriors in the early wars of the republic. Hannah Simpson was a calm, equable, self-contained young woman, as reticent and forbearing as her husband was disputatious and impetuous.

Their first child was named Hiram Ulysses Grant. Before the child was two years of age, Jesse Grant, who was superintending a tannery in Point Pleasant, removed to Georgetown, Brown County, Ohio, and set up in business for himself. Georgetown was a village in the deep woods, and in and about this village Ulysses Grant grew to be a sturdy, self-reliant boy. He loved horses, and became a remarkable rider and teamster at a very early age. He was not notable as a scholar, but it was soon apparent that he had inherited the self-poise, the reticence, and the modest demeanor of his mother. He took part in the games and sports of the boys, but displayed no military traits whatever. At the age of seventeen he was a fair scholar for his opportunities, and his ambitious father procured for him an appointment to the Military Academy at West Point. He reported at the adjutant's desk in June 1839, where he found his name on the register «Ulysses S. Grant» through a mistake of his Congressman, Thomas L. Hamer. Meanwhile, to escape ridicule on the initials of his name, which spelled «H,U,G,» he had transposed his name to Ulysses H. Grant, and at his request the adjutant changed the S to an H; but the name on record in Washington was Ulysses S., and so he remained «U. S. Grant» to the government and U. H. Grant to his friends and relatives.

His record at West Point was a good one in mathematics and fair in most of his studies. He graduated at about the middle of his class, which numbered thirty-nine. He was much beloved and respected as an upright, honorable, and loyal young fellow. At the time of his graduation he was president of the only literary society of the academy; W. S. Hancock was its secretary.

He remained markedly unmilitary throughout his course, and was remembered mainly as a good comrade, a youth of sound judgment, and the finest horseman in the academy. He asked to be assigned to cavalry duty, but was brevetted second lieutenant of the 4th Infantry, and ordered to Jefferson Barracks, near St. Louis. Here he remained till the spring of 1844, when his regiment was ordered to a point on the southwestern frontier, near the present town of Natchitoches, Louisiana. Here he remained till May 1845, when the Mexican War opened, and for the next three years he served with his regiment in every battle except Buena Vista. He was twice promoted for gallant conduct, and demonstrated his great coolness, resource, and bravery in the hottest fire. He was regimental quartermaster much of the time, and might honorably have kept out of battle, but he contrived to be in the forefront with his command.

In the autumn of 1848 he married Miss Julia Dent of St. Louis, and as first lieutenant and regimental quartermaster, with a brevet of captain, he served at Sackett's Harbor and Detroit alternately till June 1852, when he was ordered to the coast. This was a genuine hardship, for he was unable to take his wife and child with him; but he concluded to remain in the army, and went with his command, sailing from New York and passing by the way of the Isthmus. On the way across the Isthmus the regiment encountered cholera, and all Grant's coolness, resource, and bravery were required to get his charge safely across. «He seemed never to think of himself, and appeared to be a man of iron,» his companions said.

He was regimental quartermaster at Fort Vancouver, near Portland, Oregon, for one year. In 1853 he was promoted to a captaincy and ordered to Fort Humboldt, near Eureka in California. In 1854, becoming disheartened by the never-ending vista of barrack life, and despairing of being able to have his wife and children with him, he sent in his resignation, to take effect July 31st, 1854. He had lost money by unfortunate business ventures, and so returned forlorn and penniless to New York. Thence he made his way to St. Louis to his wife and children, and began the world again as a farmer, without a house or tools or horses.

His father-in-law, Mr. Frederick Dent, who lived about ten miles out of the city, set aside some sixty or eighty acres of land for his use, and thereon he built with his own hands a log cabin, which he called «Hardscrabble.» For nearly four years he lived the life of a farmer. He plowed, hoed, cleared the land, hauled wood and props to the mines, and endured all the hardships and privations of a small farmer. In 1858 his health gave way, and he moved to St. Louis in the attempt to get into some less taxing occupation. He tried for the position of county engineer, and failed. He went into the real estate business with a friend, and failed in that. He secured a place in the customs office, but the collector died and he was thrown out of employment.

In the spring of 1860, despairing of getting a foothold in St. Louis, he removed to Galena, Illinois, where his father had established a leather store, a branch of his tannery in Covington, Kentucky. Here he came in touch again with his two brothers, Simpson and Orvil Grant. He became a clerk at a salary of six hundred dollars per annum. At this time he was a quiet man of middle age, and his manner and mode of life attracted little attention till in 1861, when Sumter was fired upon and Lincoln called for volunteers. Galena at once held a war meeting to raise a company. Captain Grant, because of his military experience, was made president of the meeting, and afterward was offered the captaincy of the company, which he refused, saying, «I have been a captain in the regular army. I am fitted to command a regiment.»

He wrote at once a patriotic letter to his father-in-law, wherein he said, «I foresee the doom of slavery.» He accompanied the company to Springfield, where his military experience was needed. Governor Richard Yates gave him work in the adjutant's office, then made him drill-master at Camp Yates; and as his efficiency became apparent he was appointed governor's aide, with rank of colonel. He mustered in several regiments, among them the 7th Congressional regiment at Mattoon. He made such an impression on this regiment that they named their camp in his honor, and about the middle of June sent a delegation of officers to ask that he be made colonel. Governor Yates reluctantly appointed him, and at the request of General John C. Frémont, the commander of the Department of the West, Grant's regiment (known as the 21st Illinois Volunteers) was ordered to Missouri. Colonel Grant marched his men overland, being the first commander of the State to decline railway transportation. His efficiency soon appeared, and he was given the command of all the troops in and about Mexico, Missouri. At this point he received a dispatch from E. B. Washburne, Congressman for his district, that President Lincoln had made him brigadier-general. He was put in command at Ironton, Missouri, and was proceeding against Colonel Hardee, when he was relieved from command by B. M. Prentiss and ordered to Jefferson City, Missouri. He again brought order out of chaos, and was ready for a campaign, when he was again relieved, and by suggestion of President Lincoln placed in command of a district with headquarters at Cairo, Illinois.

This was his first adequate command, and with clear and orderly activity he organized his command of nearly ten thousand men. On the 6th of September, learning that the Confederates were advancing on Paducah, he took the city without firing a gun, and issued an address to the people of Kentucky which led Lincoln to say, «The man who can write like that is fitted to command in the West.» Early in November, in obedience to a command from Frémont, he fought the battle of Belmont, thus preventing General Polk from reinforcing Price in Missouri. This was neither a victory nor a defeat, as the purpose was not to hold Belmont.

In February 1862, with an army of twenty thousand men and accompanied by Commander Foote's flotilla, he took Fort Henry and marched on Fort Donelson. On the 16th of the same month he had invested Donelson and had beaten the enemy within their works. General Simon Buckner, his old classmate and comrade, was in command. He wrote to Grant, asking for commissioners to agree upon terms. Grant replied: «*No terms except an unconditional and immediate surrender can be accepted. I propose to move immediately upon your works.*» Buckner surrendered, and Grant's sturdy words flamed over the land, making him «Unconditional Surrender Grant.» The whole nation thrilled with the surprise and joy of this capture, and the obscure brigadier-general became the hero of the day. He was made major-general, and given the command of the District of Western Tennessee.

On the 6th and 7th of April he fought the terrible battle of Shiloh, and won it, though with great loss, owing to the failure of part of his reinforcements to arrive. Immediately after this battle, General H. W. Halleck, who had relieved General Frémont as commander in the West, took command in person, and by a clever military device deprived Grant of all command; and for six weeks the army timidly advanced on Corinth. Corinth was evacuated by the enemy before Halleck dared to attack, and Grant had no hand in any important command until late in the year.

Halleck went to Washington in July, leaving Grant again in command; but his forces were so depleted that he could do little but defend his lines and stores. In January 1863 he began to assemble his troops to attack Vicksburg, but high water kept him inactive till the following April. His plan, then fully developed, was to run the battery with gunboats and transports, march his troops across the peninsula before the city, and flank the enemy from below. This superbly audacious plan involved cutting loose from his base of supplies and all communications. He was obliged to whip two armies in detail,—Johnston at Jackson, Mississippi, and Pemberton in command at Vicksburg. This marvelous campaign was executed to the letter, and on the third day of July, Pemberton surrendered the largest body of troops ever captured on this continent up to that time, and Grant became the «man of destiny» of the army. All criticism was silenced. The world's markets rose and fell with his daily doings. Lincoln wrote him a letter of congratulation. The question of making «the prop-hauler of the Gravois» general-in-chief of all the armies of the United States was raised, and all the nation turned to him as the savior of the republic.

He was made commander of all the armies of the Mississippi, and proceeded to Chattanooga to rescue Rosecrans and his beleaguered army. In a series of swift and dramatic battles he captured Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge. Wherever he went, victory seemed to follow. His calm demeanor never changed. He was bent on «whipping out the Rebellion.» He was seen to be a warrior of a new sort. He was never malignant, or cruel, or ungenerous to his enemies; but he fought battles to win them, and the country now clamored for him to lead the armies of the Potomac against Lee, the great Southern general against whom no Northern general seemed able to prevail.

Early in March of 1864, Hon. E. B. Washburne introduced into Congress a bill reviving the grade of Lieutenant-General. It was passed by both houses with some discussion, and Lincoln conferred the title and all it implied upon Grant. He called him to Washington, and placed the whole conduct of the war in his hands. «I don't want to know your plans,» he said. Grant became absolutely chief in command, and set forth at once to direct the Army of the Potomac in person, and to encompass Lee as he had captured the armies of Buckner and Pemberton. His aim was not to whip Lee, but to destroy his army and end the war. He began an enormous encircling movement which never for one moment relaxed. The Army of the Potomac retreated no more. It had a commander who never knew when he was beaten.

He fought one day in the Wilderness, sustaining enormous losses; but when the world expected retreat, he ordered an advance. He fought another day, and on the third day ordered an advance. Lincoln said, «At last I have a general.» Grant never rested. After every battle he advanced, inexorably closing around Lee. It took him a year, but in the end he won. He captured Lee's army, and ended the war on the 9th of April, 1865. His terms with the captured general of the Southern forces were so chivalrous and generous that it gained for him the respect and even admiration of the Southern people. They could not forget that he was conqueror, but they acknowledged his greatness of heart. He had no petty revenges.

Nothing in human history exceeds the contrasts in the life of Ulysses Grant. When Lee surrendered to him, he controlled a battle line from the Potomac to the Rio Grande, composed of a million men. His lightest command had almost inconceivable power; and yet he was the same man who had hauled wood in St. Louis and sold awls and shoe-pegs in Galena,— he had been developed by opportunity. Personally he remained simple to the point of inconspicuousness. His rusty blouse, his worn hat, his dusty boots, his low and modest voice, gave no indication of his exalted position and his enormous power. At the grand review of the armies in Washington in May, he sat with musing eyes while the victorious legions passed him, so unobtrusive in the throng that his troops could hardly distinguish his form and face; and when he returned to Galena, his old home, he carried no visible sign of the power and glory to which he had won his way step by step, by sheer power of doing things so well that other and greater duties were intrusted to his keeping.

He presented a new type of soldier to the world. He was never vengeful, never angry in battle. When others swore and uttered ferocious cries, Grant remained master of himself and every faculty, uttering no oaths, giving his commands in full, clear, simple, dignified phrases. He hated conflict. He cared nothing for the pomp and circumstance of war; it was not glorious to him; and when it was all over he said, «I never want to see a soldier's uniform again.»

He was the chief citizen of the republic at the close of the war, and when Lincoln was assassinated he was the mainstay of the republic. Every eye was turned upon him, and his calmness was most salutary upon the nation. He became inevitably a candidate for President, and was elected with great enthusiasm in 1868. In 1872 he was re-elected, and during his two terms his one great purpose was to reconstruct the nation. He did all that he could to heal the scars of war. He stood between the malignants of the North and the helpless people of the South, always patient and sympathetic. His administrations ran in turbulent times, and corruption was abroad in official circles, but there is no evidence that he was touched by it. His administration was attacked; he was acquitted.

In 1878, two years after his second term had ended, he went on a trip around the world, visiting all the great courts and kings of the leading nations. He received the most extraordinary honors ever tendered to one human being by his fellows, but he returned to Galena and to his boyhood home, the same good neighbor, just as democratic in his intercourse as ever. He never forgot a face, whether of the man who shod his horses or of the man who nominated him for President, though he looked upon more people than any other man in the history of the world.

In 1880 he mistakenly became a candidate for a third term, and was defeated. Shortly after this he moved to New York City, and became a nominal partner in the firm of Grant & Ward. His name was used in the business; he had little connection with it, for he was growing old and failing in health.

In May 1884, through the rascality of Ferdinand Ward, the firm failed, and General Grant lost every dollar he owned. Just before the crash, in the attempt to save the firm, he went to a wealthy friend and borrowed a large sum of money. After the failure the grim old commander turned over to his creditor every trophy, every present which had been given him by his foreign friends, even the jeweled favors of kings and queens and the swords presented to him by his fellow-citizens and by his soldiers; he reserved nothing. He became so poor that his pew rent became a burden, and the question of earning a living came to him with added force, for he was old and lame, and attacked by cancer of the tongue.

Now came the most heroic year of his life. Suffering almost ceaseless pain, with the death shadow on him, he sat down to write his autobiography for the benefit of his wife. He complained not at all, and allowed nothing to stand in the way of his work. He wrote on steadily, up to the very day of his death, long after the power of speech was gone, revising his proofs, correcting his judgments of commanders as new evidence arose, and in the end producing a book which was a marvel of simple sincerity and modesty of statement, and of transparent clarity of style. It took rank at once as one of the great martial biographies of the world. It redeemed his name and gave his wife a competency. It was a greater deed than the taking of Vicksburg.

In this final illness his thoughts dwelt much upon the differences between the North and the South. From Mt. McGregor, where he was taken in June 1885 to escape the heat of the city, he sent forth repeated messages of good-will to the South. In this hour the two mighty purposes of his life grew clearer in men's minds. He had put down the Rebellion, and from the moment of Lee's surrender had set himself the task of reuniting the severed nation. «Let us have peace,» he said; and the saying had all the effect of a benediction.

He died on July 23d, 1885, at the age of sixty-three; and at his grave the North and the South stood side by side in friendship, and the great captains of opposing armies walked shoulder to shoulder, bearing his body to its final rest on the bank of the Hudson River. The world knew his faults, his mistakes, and his weaknesses; but they were all forgotten in the memory of his great deeds as a warrior, and of his gentleness, modesty, candor, and purity as a man. Since then it becomes increasingly more evident that he is to take his place as one of three or four figures of the first class in our national history. He was a man of action, and his deeds were of the kind which mark epochs in history.

Hamlin Garland

EARLY LIFE

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In June 1821 my father, Jesse R. Grant, married Hannah Simpson. I was born on the 27th of April, 1822, at Point Pleasant, Clermont County, Ohio. In the fall of 1823 we moved to Georgetown, the county seat of Brown, the adjoining county east. This place remained my home until at the age of seventeen, in 1839, I went to West Point.

The schools at the time of which I write were very indifferent. There were no free schools, and none in which the scholars were classified. They were all supported by subscription, and a single teacher — who was often a man or a woman incapable of teaching much, even if they imparted all they knew — would have thirty or forty scholars, male and female, from the infant learning the A B C's up to the young lady of eighteen and the boy of twenty, studying the highest branches taught — the three R's, « Reading, 'Riting, and 'Rithmetic.» I never saw an algebra or other mathematical work higher than the arithmetic, in Georgetown, until after I was appointed to West Point. I then bought a work on algebra, in Cincinnati; but having no teacher, it was Greek to me.

My life in Georgetown was uneventful. From the age of five or six until seventeen, I attended the subscription schools of the village, except during the winters of 1836–7 and 1838–9. The former period was spent in Maysville, Kentucky, attending the school of Richardson and Rand; the latter in Ripley, Ohio, at a private school. I was not studious in habit, and probably did not make progress enough to compensate for the outlay for board and tuition. At all events, both winters were spent in going over the same old arithmetic which I knew every word of before, and repeating, "A noun is the name of a thing," which I had also heard my Georgetown teachers repeat until I had come to believe it — but I cast no reflections upon my old teacher Richardson. He turned out bright scholars from his school, many of whom have filled conspicuous places in the service of their States. Two of my contemporaries there — who I believe never attended any other institution of learning — have held seats in Congress, and one, if not both, other high offices; these are Wadsworth and Brewster.

My father was from my earliest recollection in comfortable circumstances, considering the times, his place of residence, and the community in which he lived. Mindful of his own lack of facilities for acquiring an education, his greatest desire in maturer years was for the education of his children. Consequently, as stated before, I never missed a quarter from school, from the time I was old enough to attend till the time of leaving home. This did not exempt me from labor. In my early days every one labored more or less, in the region where my youth was spent, and more in proportion to their private means. It was only the very poor who were exempt. While my father carried on the manufacture of leather and worked at the trade himself, he owned and tilled considerable land. I detested the trade, preferring almost any other labor; but I was fond of agriculture, and of all employment in which horses were used. We had, among other lands, fifty acres of forest within a mile of the village. In the fall of the year, choppers were employed to cut enough wood to last a twelvemonth. When I was seven or eight years of age, I began hauling all the wood used in the house and shops. I could not load it on the wagons, of course, at that time; but I could drive, and the choppers would load, and some one at the house unload. When about eleven years old, I was strong enough to hold a plow. From that age until seventeen I did all the work done with horses, such as breaking up the land, furrowing, plowing corn and potatoes, bringing in the crops when harvested, hauling all the wood, besides tending two or three horses, a cow or two, and sawing wood for stoves, etc., while still attending school. For this I was compensated by the fact that there was never any scolding or punishing by my parents; no objection to rational enjoyments, such as fishing, going to the creek a mile away to swim in summer, taking a horse and visiting my grandparents in the adjoining county, fifteen miles off, skating on the ice in winter, or taking a horse and sleigh when there was snow on the ground.

While still quite young I had visited Cincinnati, forty-five miles away, several times, alone; also Maysville, Kentucky,— often,— and once Louisville. The journey to Louisville was a big one for a boy of that day. I had also gone once with a two-horse carriage to Chillicothe, about seventy miles, with a neighbor's family who were removing to Toledo, Ohio, and returned alone; and had gone once in like manner to Flat Rock, Kentucky, about seventy miles away. On this latter occasion I was fifteen years of age. While at Flat Rock, at the house of a Mr. Payne, whom I was visiting with his brother, a neighbor of ours in Georgetown, I saw a very fine saddle horse which I rather coveted; and proposed to Mr. Payne, the owner, to trade him for one of the two I was driving. Payne hesitated to trade with a boy, but asking his brother about it, the latter told him that it would be all right; that I was allowed to do as I pleased with the horses. I was seventy miles from home, with a carriage to take back, and Mr. Payne said he did not know that his horse had ever had a collar on. I asked to have him hitched to a farm wagon, and we would soon see whether he would work. It was soon evident that the horse had never worn harness before; but he showed no viciousness, and I expressed a confidence that I could manage him. A trade was at once struck, I receiving ten dollars difference.

The next day, Mr. Payne of Georgetown and I started on our return. We got along very well for a few miles, when we encountered a ferocious dog that frightened the horses and made them run. The new animal kicked at every jump he made. I got the horses stopped, however, before any damage was done, and without running into anything. After giving them a little rest, to quiet their fears, we started again. That instant the new horse kicked, and started to run once more. The road we were on struck the turnpike within half a mile of the point where the second runaway commenced, and there was an embankment twenty or more feet deep on the opposite side of the pike. I got the horses stopped on the very brink of the precipice. My new horse was terribly frightened, and trembled like an aspen; but he was not half so badly frightened as my companion Mr. Payne, who deserted me after this last experience, and took passage on a freight wagon for Maysville. Every time I attempted to start, my new horse would commence to kick. I was in quite a dilemma for a time. Once in Maysville, I could borrow a horse from an uncle who lived there; but I was more than a day's travel from that point. Finally I took out my bandanna — the style of handkerchief in universal use then — and with this blindfolded my horse. In this way I reached Maysville safely the next day, no doubt much to the surprise of my friend. Here I borrowed a horse from my uncle, and the following day we proceeded on our journey.

About half my school days in Georgetown were spent at the school of John D. White, a North-Carolinian, and the father of Chilton White, who represented the district in Congress for one term during the Rebellion. Mr. White was always a Democrat in politics, and Chilton followed his father. He had two older brothers,— all three being schoolmates of mine at their father's school,— who did not go the same way. The second brother died before the Rebellion began; he was a Whig, and afterwards a Republican. His oldest brother was a Republican and brave soldier during the Rebellion. Chilton is reported as having told of an earlier horse trade of mine. As he told the story, there was a Mr. Ralston living within a few miles of the village, who owned a colt which I very much wanted. My father had offered twenty dollars for it, but Ralston wanted twenty-five. I was so anxious to have the colt, that after the owner left I begged to be allowed to take him at the price demanded. My father yielded, but said twenty dollars was all the horse was worth, and told me to offer that price; if it was not accepted I was to offer twenty-two and a half, and if that would not get him, to give the twenty-five. I at once mounted a horse and went for the colt. When I got to Mr. Ralston's house, I said to him, "Papa says I may offer you twenty dollars for the colt, but if you won't take that, I am to offer twenty-two and a half, and if you won't take that, to give you twenty-five." It would not require a Connecticut man to guess the price finally agreed upon. This story is nearly true. I certainly showed very plainly that I had come for the colt and meant to have him. I could not have been over eight years old at the time. This transaction caused me great heart-burning. The story got out among the boys of the village, and it was a long time before I heard the last of it. Boys enjoy the misery of their companions,— at least village boys in that day did, and in later life I have found that all adults are not free from the peculiarity. I kept the horse until he was four years old, when he went blind, and I sold him for twenty dollars. When I went to Maysville to school, in 1836, at the age of fourteen, I recognized my colt as one of the blind horses working on the tread-wheel of the ferry-boat.

I have described enough of my early life to give an impression of the whole. I did not like to work; but I did as much of it, while young, as grown men can be hired to do in these days, and attended school at the same time. I had as many privileges as any boy in the village, and probably more than most of them. I have no recollection of ever having been punished at home, either by scolding or by the rod. But at school the case was different. The rod was freely used there, and I was not exempt from its influence. I can see John D. White, the school-teacher, now, with his long beech switch always in his hand. It was not always the same one, either. Switches were brought in bundles from a beech wood near the schoolhouse, by the boys for whose benefit they were intended. Often a whole bundle would be used up in a single day. I never had any hard feelings against my teacher, either while attending the school or in later years when reflecting upon my experience. Mr. White was a kind-hearted man, and was much respected by the community in which he lived. He only followed the universal custom of the period, and that under which he had received his own education. . . .

In the winter of 1838–9 I was attending school at Ripley, only ten miles distant from Georgetown, but spent the Christmas holidays at home. During this vacation my father received a letter from the Honorable Thomas Morris, then United States Senator from Ohio. When he read it he said to me, «Ulysses, I believe you are going to receive the appointment.» «What appointment?» I inquired.—«To West Point; I have applied for it.» «But I won't go,» I said. He said he thought I would, *and I thought so too, if he did.* I really had no objection to going to West Point, except that I had a very exalted idea of the acquirements necessary to get through. I did not believe I possessed them, and could not bear the idea of failing.

GRANT'S COURTSHIP

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At West Point I had a classmate,—in the last year of our studies he was room-mate also,—F. T. Dent, whose family resided some five miles west of Jefferson Barracks. Two of his unmarried brothers were living at home at that time, and as I had taken with me from Ohio my horse, saddle, and bridle, I soon found my way out to White Haven, the name of the Dent estate. As I found the family congenial, my visits became frequent. There were at home, besides the young men, two daughters, one a school-miss of fifteen, the other a girl of eight or nine. There was still an older daughter of seventeen, who had been spending several years at a boarding-school in St. Louis, but who, though through school, had not yet returned home. She was spending the winter in the city with connections, the family of Colonel John O'Fallon, well known in St. Louis. In February she returned to her country home. After that I do not know but my visits became more frequent: they certainly did become more enjoyable. We would often take walks, or go on horseback to visit the neighbors, until I became quite well acquainted in that vicinity. Sometimes one of the brothers would accompany us, sometimes one of the younger sisters. If the 4th Infantry had remained at Jefferson Barracks it is possible, even probable, that this life might have continued for some years without my finding out that there was anything serious the matter with me; but in the following May a circumstance occurred which developed my sentiment so palpably that there was no mistaking it.

The annexation of Texas was at this time the subject of violent discussion in Congress, in the press, and by individuals. The administration of President Tyler, then in power, was making the most strenuous efforts to effect the annexation, which was indeed the great and absorbing question of the day. During these discussions the greater part of the single rifle regiment in the army —the 2d Dragoons, which had been dismounted a year or two before, and designated «Dismounted Rifles»—was stationed at Fort Jessup, Louisiana, some twenty-five miles east of the Texas line, to observe the frontier. About the first of May the 3d Infantry was ordered from Jefferson Barracks to Louisiana, to go into camp in the neighborhood of Fort Jessup, and there await further orders. The troops were embarked on steamers, and were on their way down the Mississippi within a few days after the receipt of this order. About the time they started I obtained a leave of absence for twenty days to go to Ohio to visit my parents. I was obliged to go to St. Louis to take a steamer for Louisville or Cincinnati, or the first steamer going up the Ohio River to any point. Before I left St. Louis, orders were received at Jefferson Barracks for the 4th Infantry to follow the 3d. A messenger was sent after me to stop my leaving; but before he could reach me I was off, totally ignorant of these events. A day or two after my arrival at Bethel I received a letter from a classmate and fellow lieutenant in the 4th, informing me of the circumstances related above, and advising me not to open any letter postmarked St. Louis or Jefferson Barracks until the expiration of my leave, and saying that he would pack up my things and take them along for me. His advice was not necessary, for no other letter was sent to me. I now discovered that I was exceedingly anxious to get back to Jefferson Barracks, and I understood the reason without explanation from any one. My leave of absence required me to report for duty at Jefferson Barracks at the end of twenty days. I knew my regiment had gone up the Red River, but I was not disposed to break the letter of my leave; besides, if I had proceeded to Louisiana direct, I could not have reached there until after the expiration of my leave. Accordingly, at the end of the twenty days I reported for duty to Lieutenant Ewell, commanding at Jefferson Barracks, handing him at the same time my leave of absence. After noticing the phraseology of the order — leaves of absence were generally worded, "at the end of which time he will report for duty with his proper command" — he said he would give me an order to join my regiment in Louisiana. I then asked for a few days' leave before starting, which he readily granted. This was the same Ewell who acquired considerable reputation as a Confederate general during the Rebellion. He was a man much esteemed, and deservedly so, in the old army, and proved himself a gallant and efficient officer in two wars — both in my estimation unholy.

I immediately procured a horse and started for the country, taking no baggage with me, of course. There is an insignificant creek, the Gravois, between Jefferson Barracks and the place to which I was going, and at that day there was not a bridge over it from its source to its mouth. There is not water enough in the creek at ordinary stages to run a coffee-mill, and at low water there is none running whatever. On this occasion it had been raining heavily, and when the creek was reached I found the banks full to overflowing, and the current rapid. I looked at it a moment to consider what to do. One of my superstitions had always been when I started to go anywhere, or do anything, not to turn back or stop until the thing intended was accomplished. I have frequently started to go to places where I had never been and to which I did not know the way, depending upon making inquiries on the road, and if I got past the place without knowing it, instead of turning back, I would go on until a road was found turning in the right direction, take that, and come in by the other side. So I struck into the stream, and in an instant the horse was swimming and I being carried down by the current. I headed the horse towards the other bank and soon reached it, wet through and without other clothes on that side of the stream. I went on, however, to my destination and borrowed a dry suit from my (future) brother-in-law. We were not of the same size, but the clothes answered every purpose until I got more of my own.

Before I returned I mustered up courage to make known, in the most awkward manner imaginable, the discovery I had made on learning that the 4th Infantry had been ordered away from Jefferson Barracks. The young lady afterwards admitted that she too, although until then she had never looked upon me other than as a visitor whose company was agreeable to her, had experienced a depression of spirits she could not account for when the regiment left. Before separating, it was definitely understood that at a convenient time we would join our fortunes, and not let the removal of a regiment trouble us. This was in May 1844. It was the 22d of August, 1848, before the fulfillment of this agreement. My duties kept me on the frontier of Louisiana with the Army of Observation during the pendency of Annexation; and afterwards I was absent through the war with Mexico provoked by the action of the army, if not by the annexation itself. During that time there was a constant correspondence between Miss Dent and myself, but we only met once in the period of four years and three months. In May 1845 I procured a leave for twenty days, visited St. Louis, and obtained the consent of the parents for the union, which had not been asked for before.

A TEXAN EXPERIENCE

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I HAD never been a sportsman in my life; had scarcely ever gone in search of game, and rarely seen any when looking for it. On this trip there was no minute of time while traveling between San Patricio and the settlements on the San Antonio River, from San Antonio to Austin, and again from the Colorado River back to San Patricio, when deer or antelope could not be seen in great numbers. Each officer carried a shotgun, and every evening after going into camp, some would go out and soon return with venison and wild turkeys enough for the entire camp. I however never went out, and had no occasion to fire my gun; except, being detained over a day at Goliad, Benjamin and I concluded to go down to the creek — which was fringed with timber, much of it the pecan — and bring back a few turkeys. We had scarcely reached the edge of the timber when I heard the flutter of wings overhead, and in an instant I saw two or three turkeys flying away. These were soon followed by more, then more and more, until a flock of twenty or thirty had left from just over my head. All this time I stood watching the turkeys to see where they flew, with my gun on my shoulder, and never once thought of leveling it at the birds. When I had time to reflect upon the matter, I came to the conclusion that as a sportsman I was a failure, and went back to the house. Benjamin remained out, and got as many turkeys as he wanted to carry back.

After the second night at Goliad, Benjamin and I started to make the remainder of the journey alone. We reached Corpus Christi just in time to avoid «absence without leave.» We met no one, not even an Indian, during the remainder of our journey, except at San Patricio. A new settlement had been started there in our absence of three weeks, induced possibly by the fact that there were houses already built, while the proximity of troops gave protection against the Indians. On the evening of the first day out from Goliad we heard the most unearthly howling of wolves, directly in our front. The prairie grass was tall and we could not see the beasts, but the sound indicated that they were near. To my ear it appeared that there must have been enough of them to devour our party, horses and all, at a single meal. The part of Ohio that I hailed from was not thickly settled, but wolves had been driven out long before I left. Benjamin was from Indiana, still less populated, where the wolf yet roamed over the prairies. He understood the nature of the animal, and the capacity of a few to make believe there was an unlimited number of them. He kept on towards the noise, unmoved. I followed in his trail, lacking moral courage to turn back and join our sick companion. I have no doubt that if Benjamin had proposed returning to Goliad, I would not only have «seconded the motion,» but have suggested that it was very hard-hearted in us to leave Augur sick there in the first place; but Benjamin did not propose turning back. When he did speak it was to ask, «Grant, how many wolves do you think there are in that pack?» Knowing where he was from, and suspecting that he thought I would overestimate the number, I determined to show my acquaintance with the animal by putting the estimate below what possibly could be correct, and answered, «Oh, about twenty,» very indifferently. He smiled and rode on. In a minute we were close upon them, and before they saw us. There were just *two* of them. Seated upon their haunches, with their mouths close together, they had made all the noise we had been hearing for the past ten minutes. I have often thought of this incident since, when I have heard the noise of a few disappointed politicians who had deserted their associates. There are always more of them before they are counted.

THE SURRENDER OF GENERAL LEE

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WARS produce many stories of fiction, some of which are told until they are believed to be true. The War of the Rebellion was no exception to this rule, and the story of the apple-tree is one of those fictions based on a slight foundation of fact. As I have said, there was an apple orchard on the side of the hill occupied by the Confederate forces. Running diagonally up the hill was a wagon road, which at one point ran very near one of the trees, so that the wheels of vehicles had on that side cut off the roots of this tree, leaving a little embankment. General Babcock, of my staff, reported to me that when he first met General Lee he was sitting upon this embankment with his feet in the road below and his back resting against the tree. The story had no other foundation than that. Like many other stories, it would be very good if it was only true.

I had known General Lee in the old army, and had served with him in the Mexican War: but did not suppose, owing to the difference in our age and rank, that he would remember me; while I would more naturally remember him distinctly, because he was the chief of staff of General Scott in the Mexican War.

When I had left camp that morning I had not expected so soon the result that was then taking place, and consequently was in rough garb. I was without a sword, as I usually was when on horseback on the field, and wore a soldier's blouse for a coat, with the shoulder-straps of my rank to indicate to the army who I was. When I went into the house I found General Lee. We greeted each other, and after shaking hands took our seats. I had my staff with me, a good portion of whom were in the room during the whole of the interview.

What General Lee's feelings were I do not know. As he was a man of much dignity, with an impassible face, it was impossible to say whether he felt inwardly glad that the end had finally come, or felt sad over the result and was too manly to show it. Whatever his feelings, they were entirely concealed from my observation; but my own feelings, which had been quite jubilant on the receipt of his letter, were sad and depressed. I felt like anything rather than rejoicing at the downfall of a foe who had fought so long and valiantly, and had suffered so much for a cause,— though that cause was, I believe, one of the worst for which a people ever fought, and one for which there was the least excuse. I do not question, however, the sincerity of the great mass of those who were opposed to us.

General Lee was dressed in a full uniform which was entirely new, and was wearing a sword of considerable value, very likely the sword which had been presented by the State of Virginia; at all events, it was an entirely different sword from the one that would ordinarily be worn in the field. In my rough traveling suit, the uniform of a private with the straps of a lieutenant-general, I must have contrasted very strangely with a man so handsomely dressed, six feet high and of faultless form. But this was not a matter that I thought of until afterwards.

We soon fell into a conversation about old army times. He remarked that he remembered me very well in the old army; and I told him that as a matter of course I remembered him perfectly, but from the difference in our rank and years (there being about sixteen years' difference in our ages), I had thought it very likely that I had not attracted his attention sufficiently to be remembered by him after such a long interval. Our conversation grew so pleasant that I almost forgot the object of our meeting. After the conversation had run on in this style for some time, General Lee called my attention to the object of our meeting, and said that he had asked for this interview for the purpose of getting from me the terms I proposed to give his army. I said that I meant merely that his army should lay down their arms, not to take them up again during the continuance of the war unless duly and properly exchanged. He said that he had so understood my letter.

Then we gradually fell off again into conversation about matters foreign to the subject which had brought us together. This continued for some little time, when General Lee again interrupted the course of the conversation by suggesting that the terms I had proposed to give his army ought to be written out. I called to General Parker, secretary on my staff, for writing materials, and commenced writing out the following terms:—

APPOMATTOX C. H., VA., April 9th, 1865.

Gen. R. E. Lee, Comd'g C. S. A.

GEN.:—In accordance with the substance of my letter to you of the 8th inst., I propose to receive the surrender of the Army of N. Va. on the following terms, to wit: Rolls of all the officers and men to be made in duplicate. One copy to be given to an officer designated by me, the other to be retained by such officer or officers as you may designate. The officers to give their individual paroles not to take up arms against the Government of the United States until properly exchanged, and each company or regimental commander sign a like parole for the men of their commands. The arms, artillery, and public property to be parked and stacked, and turned over to the officer appointed by me to receive them. This will not embrace the side-arms of the officers, nor their private horses or baggage. This done, each officer and man will be allowed to return to their homes, not to be disturbed by United States authority so long as they observe their paroles and the laws in force where they may reside.

Very respectfully,
U. S. Grant,
Lt. Gen.

When I put my pen to the paper I did not know the first word that I should make use of in writing the terms. I only knew what was in my mind, and I wished to express it clearly, so that there could be no mistaking it. As I wrote on, the thought occurred to me that the officers had their own private horses and effects, which were important to them but of no value to us; also that it would be an unnecessary humiliation to call upon them to deliver their side-arms.

No conversation, not one word, passed between General Lee and myself, either about private property, side-arms, or kindred subjects. He appeared to have no objections to the terms first proposed; or if he had a point to make against them, he wished to wait until they were in writing to make it. When he read over that part of the terms about side-arms, horses, and private property of the officers, he remarked — with some feeling, I thought — that this would have a happy effect upon his army.

Then, after a little further conversation, General Lee remarked to me again that their army was organized a little diferently from the army of the United States (still maintaining by implication that we were two countries); that in their army the cavalrymen and artillerists owned their own horses: and he asked if he was to understand that the men who so owned their horses were to be permitted to retain them. I told him that as the terms were written they would not; that only the officers were permitted to take their private property. He then, after reading over the terms a second time, remarked that that was clear.

I then said to him that I thought this would be about the last battle of the war — I sincerely hoped so; and I said further, I took it that most of the men in the ranks were small farmers. The whole country had been so raided by the two armies that it was doubtful whether they would be able to put in a crop to carry themselves and their families through the next winter without the aid of the horses they were then riding. The United States did not want them; and I would therefore instruct the officers I left behind to receive the paroles of his troops to let every man of the Confederate army who claimed to own a horse or mule take the animal to his home. Lee remarked again that this would have a happy effect.

He then sat down and wrote out the following letter:—

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA, April 9th, 1865.

GENERAL:—I received your letter of this date containing the terms of the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia as proposed by you. As they are substantially the same as those expressed in your letter of the 8th inst., they are accepted. I will proceed to designate the proper officers to carry the stipulations into effect.

R. E. LEE,
General.

Lieut.-General U. S. Grant.

While duplicates of the two letters were being made, the Union generals present were severally presented to General Lee.

The much-talked-of surrendering of Lee's sword and my handing it back, this and much more that has been said about it is the purest romance. The word sword or side-arms was not mentioned by either of us until I wrote it in the terms. There was no premeditation, and it did not occur to me until the moment I wrote it down. If I had happened to omit it, and General Lee had called my attention to it, I should have put it in the terms, precisely as I acceded to the provision about the soldiers retaining their horses.

General Lee, after all was completed and before taking his leave, remarked that his army was in a very bad condition for want of food, and that they were without forage; that his men had been living for some days on parched corn exclusively, and that he would have to ask me for rations and forage. I told him «Certainly,» and asked for how many men he wanted rations. His answer was «About twenty-five thousand»; and I authorized him to send his own commissary and quartermaster to Appomattox Station, two or three miles away, where he could have, out of the trains we had stopped, all the provisions wanted. As for forage, we had ourselves depended almost entirely upon the country for that.

Generals Gibbon, Griffin, and Merritt were designated by me to carry into effect the paroling of Lee's troops before they should start for their homes,—General Lee leaving Generals Longstreet, Gordon, and Pendleton for them to confer with in order to facilitate this work. Lee and I then separated as cordially as we had met, he returning to his own lines, and all went into bivouac for the night at Appomattox.

HENRY GRATTAN

(1746–1820)

HENRY GRATTAN, eminent among Irish orators and statesmen, was born in Dublin, July 3d, 1746. He graduated from Trinity College in 1767, became a law student of the Middle Temple, London, and was admitted to the bar in 1772. He soon became drawn into open political life, entering the Irish Parliament in 1775.

HENRY GRATTAN

In Parliament he espoused the popular cause. His memorable displays of oratory followed fast and plentifully. On April 19th, 1780, he attacked the right of England to legislate for Ireland. With that address his reputation was made. He became incessant in his efforts to remove oppressive legislation. By his eloquence he quickened into life a national spirit, to culminate in a convention at Dungannon on February 15th, 1782, where resolutions in favor of legislative independence were stormily adopted. Presently, after a speech of surpassing power from him, the Declaration of Rights Bill was passed unanimously by both houses, with an unwilling enactment from England. The idol now of Ireland, Grattan was voted by its Parliament a grant of £50,000 «as a testimony of national gratitude for great national services.» The next eighteen years saw him resolute to secure for Ireland liberal laws, greater commercial freedom, better conditions for the peasantry, the wiping out of Parliamentary corruption, and especially the absolute emancipation of the Roman Catholics. After the Union he lived in retirement, devoting himself to the study of the classics and to the education of his children until 1805. Then at the request of Fox he entered the imperial Parliament, making his first speech in favor of Fox's motion for a committee on the Roman Catholic Petition, an address described as «one of the most brilliant speeches ever made within the walls of Parliament.» In 1806 he was elected a member for Dublin, which city he represented until his decease. His last speech was made on May 5th, 1819, in favor of Roman Catholic emancipation. It is to be noted that he was by profession and conviction a Protestant. He died in

1820. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, near the graves of Chatham and Fox.

In spite of great natural drawbacks, Grattan achieved the highest rank as an orator; and his passionate eloquence has rarely been equaled in fervor and originality.

ON THE CHARACTER OF CHATHAM

The Secretary stood alone; modern degeneracy had not reached him. Original and unaccommodating, the features of his character had the hardihood of antiquity. His august mind overawed majesty; and one of his sovereigns thought royalty so impaired in his presence that he conspired to remove him, in order to be relieved from his superiority. No State chicanery, no narrow system of vicious politics, sank him to the vulgar level of the great; but overbearing, persuasive, and impracticable, his object was England, his ambition was fame. Without dividing, he destroyed party; without corrupting, he made a venal age unanimous.

France sank beneath him. With one hand he smote the house of Bourbon, and wielded with the other the democracy of England. The sight of his mind was infinite; and his schemes were to affect, not England and the present age only, but Europe and posterity. Wonderful were the means by which these schemes were accomplished; always seasonable, always adequate, the suggestions of an understanding animated by order and enlightened by prophecy.

The ordinary feelings which render life amiable and indolent were unknown to him. No domestic difficulty, no domestic weakness reached him; but aloof from the sordid occurrences of life, and unsullied by its intercourse, he came occasionally into our system to counsel and to decide. A character so exalted, so strenuous, so various, and so authoritative astonished a corrupt age; and the treasury trembled at the name of Pitt, through all her classes of venality. Corruption imagined indeed that she had found defects in this statesman, and talked much of the ruin of his victories; but the history of his country and the calamities of the enemy refuted her.

Nor were his political abilities his only talents: his eloquence was an era in the Senate; peculiar and spontaneous, familiarly expressing gigantic sentiments and instinctive wisdom; not like the torrent of Demosthenes, or the splendid conflagration of Tully, it resembled sometimes the thunder and sometimes the music of the spheres. He did not, like Murray, conduct the understanding through the painful subtlety of argumentation, nor was he, like Townshend, forever on the rack of exertion; but rather lightened upon the subject, and reached the point by flashings of the mind, which like those of his eye were felt but could not be followed.

Upon the whole, there was something in this man that could create, subvert, or reform: an understanding, a spirit, and an eloquence, to summon mankind to society, or to break the bonds of slavery asunder and to rule the wilderness of free minds with unbounded authority; something that could establish or overwhelm empires, and strike a blow in the world which should resound throughout the universe.

OF THE INJUSTICE OF DISQUALIFICATION OF CATHOLICS

From the Speech of May 31st, 1811

Whatever belongs to the authority of God, or to the laws of nature, is necessarily beyond the province and sphere of human institution and government. The Roman Catholic, when you disqualify him on the ground of his religion, may with great justice tell you that you are not his God, that he cannot mold or fashion his faith by your decrees. You may inflict penalties, and he may suffer them in silence; but if Parliament assume the prerogative of Heaven, and enact laws to impose upon the people a different religion, the people will not obey such laws. If you pass an act to impose a tax or regulate a duty, the people can go to the roll to learn what are the provisions of the law. But whenever you take upon yourselves to legislate for God, though there may be truth in your enactments, you have no authority to enforce them. In such a case, the people will not go to the roll of Parliament, but to the Bible, the testament of God's will, to ascertain his law and their duty. When once man goes out of his sphere, and says he will legislate for God, he in fact makes himself God. But this I do not charge upon the Parliament, because in none of the Penal Acts has the

Parliament imposed a religious creed. It is not to be traced in the qualification oath, nor in the declaration required. The qualifying oath, as to the great number of offices and seats in Parliament, scrupulously evades religious distinctions; a Dissenter of any class may take it, a Deist, an atheist, may likewise take it. The Catholics are alone excepted; and for what reason? Certainly not because the internal character of the Catholic religion is inherently vicious; not because it necessarily incapacitates those who profess it to make laws for their fellow-citizens. If a Deist be fit to sit in Parliament, it can hardly be urged that a Christian is unfit. If an atheist be competent to legislate for his country, surely this privilege cannot be denied to the believer in the divinity of our Savior. But let me ask you if you have forgotten what was the faith of your ancestors, or if you are prepared to assert that the men who procured your liberties are unfit to make your laws? Or do you forget the tempests by which the Dissenting classes of the community were at a former period agitated, or in what manner you fixed the rule of peace over that wild scene of anarchy and commotion? If we attend to the present condition and habits of these classes, do we not find their controversies subsisting in full vigor? and can it be said that their jarring sentiments and clashing interests are productive of any disorder in the State; or that the Methodist himself, in all his noisy familiarity with his Maker, is a dangerous or disloyal subject? Upon what principle can it be argued that the application of a similar policy would not conciliate the Catholics, and promote the general interests of the empire? I can trace the continuance of their incapacities to nothing else than a political combination; a combination that condemned the Catholic religion, not as a heresy, but as a symptom of a civil alienation. By this doctrine, the religion is not so much an evil in itself as a perpetual token of political disaffection. In the spirit of this liberal interpretation, you once decreed to take away their arms, and on another occasion ordered all Papists to be removed from London. In the whole subsequent course of administration, the religion has continued to be esteemed the infallible symptom of a propensity to rebel. Known or suspected Papists were once the objects of the severest jealousy and the bitterest enactments. Some of these statutes have been repealed, and the jealousy has since somewhat abated; but the same suspicions, although in a less degree, pervade your councils. Your imaginations are still infected with apprehensions of the proneness of the Catholics to make cause with a foreign foe. A treaty has lately been made with the King of the Two Sicilies. May I ask: Is his religion the evidence of the warmth of his attachment to your alliance? Does it enter into your calculation as one of the motives that must incline him to our friendship, in preference to the friendship of the State professing his own faith? A similar treaty has been recently entered into with the Prince Regent of Portugal, professing the Roman Catholic religion; and one million granted last year and two millions this session, for the defense of Portugal. Nay, even in the treaty with the Prince Regent of Portugal, there is an article which stipulates that we shall not make peace with France unless Portugal shall be restored to the house of Braganza. And has the Prince of Brazil's religion been considered evidence of his connection with the enemy? You have not one ally who is not Catholic; and will you continue to disqualify Irish Catholics, who fight with you and your allies, because their religion is evidence of disaffection?

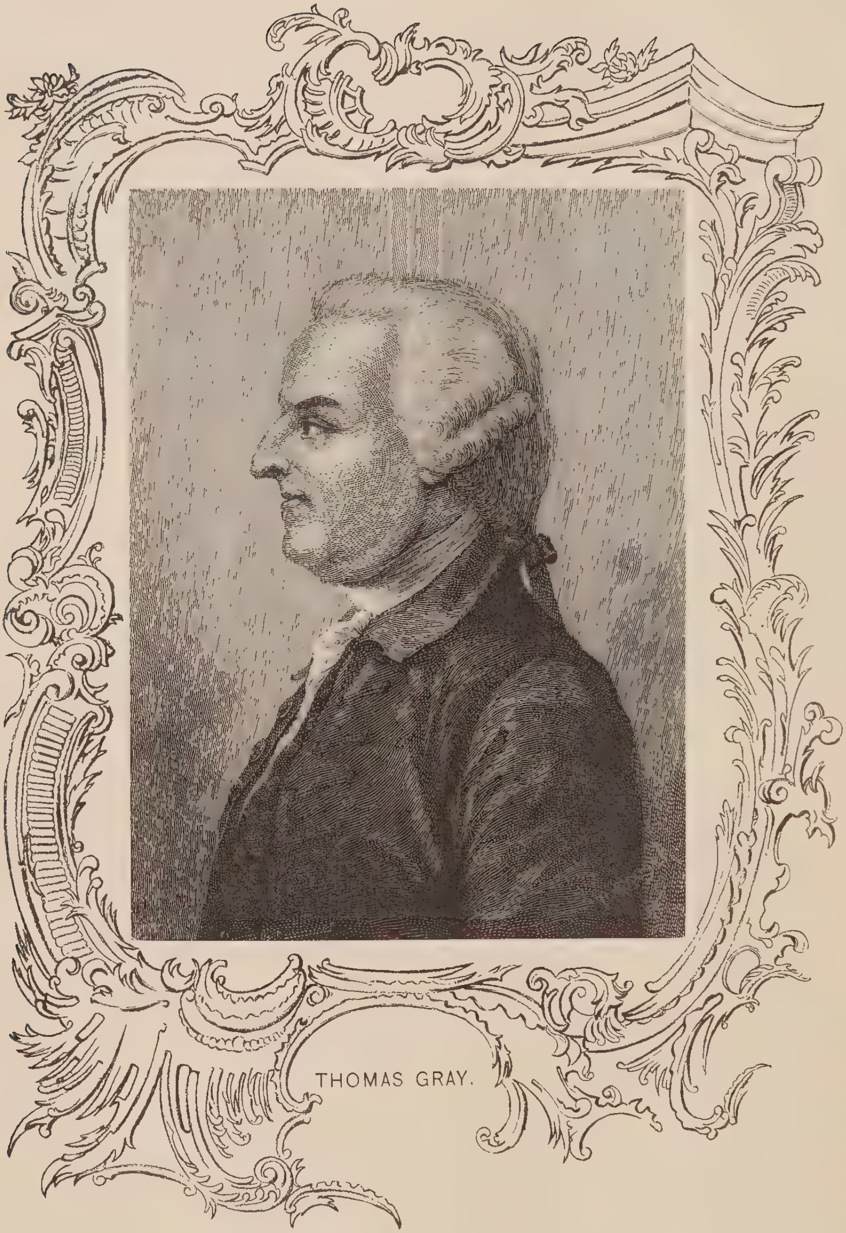
But if the Catholic religion be this evidence of repugnance, is Protestantism the proof of affection to the Crown and government of England? For an answer, let us look at America. In vain did you send your armies there; in vain did you appeal to the ties of common origin and common religion. America joined with France, and adopted a connection with a Catholic government. Turn to Prussia, and behold whether her religion has had any effect on her political character. Did the faith of Denmark prevent the attack on Copenhagen? It is admitted on all sides that the Catholics have demonstrated their allegiance in as strong a manner as the willing expenditure of blood and treasure can evince. And remember that the French go not near so far in their defense of Catholicism, as you in your hatred of it in your own subjects and your reverence for it in your allies. They have not scrupled to pull down the ancient fabrics of superstition in the countries subjected to their arms. Upon a review of these facts, I am justified in assuming that there is nothing inherent in Catholicism which either proves disaffection, or disqualifies for public trusts. The immediate inference is that they have as much right as any dissentient sect to the enjoyment of civil privileges and a participation of equal rights; that they are as fit morally and politically to hold offices in the State or seats in Parliament. Those who dispute the conclusion will find it their duty to controvert the reasoning on which it is founded. I do not believe the Church is in any danger; but if it is, I am sure that we are in a wrong way to secure it. If our laws will battle against Providence, there can be no doubt of the issue of the conflict between the ordinances of God and the decrees of man: transient must be the struggle, rapid the event. Let us suppose an extreme case, but applicable to the present point: Suppose the Thames were to inundate its banks, and suddenly swelling, enter this House during our deliberations (an event which I greatly deprecate, from my private friendship with many members who might happen to be present, and my sense of the great exertions which many of them have made for the public interest), and a motion of adjournment being made, should be opposed, and an address to Providence moved that it would be graciously pleased to turn back the overflow and direct the waters into another channel. This, it will be said, would be absurd; but consider whether you are acting upon a principle of greater intrinsic wisdom, when after provoking the resentments you arm and martialize the ambition of men, under the vain assurance that Providence will work a miracle in the constitution of human nature, and dispose it to pay injustice with affection, oppression with cordial support. This is in fact the true character of your expectations; nothing less than that the Author of the Universe should subvert his laws to ratify your statutes, and disturb the settled course of nature to confirm the weak, the base expedients of man. What says the Decalogue? Honor thy father. What says the penal law? Take away his estate! Again, says the Decalogue, Do not steal. The law, on the contrary, proclaims, You may rob a Catholic!

ON THE DOWNFALL OF BONAPARTE

From the Speech of May 25th, 1815

The French government is war; it is a stratocracy, elective, aggressive, and predatory; her armies live to fight, and fight to live; their constitution is essentially war, and the object of that war the conquest of Europe. What such a person as Bonaparte at the head of such a constitution will do, you may judge by what he has done: and first he took possession of a greater part of Europe; he made his son King of Rome; he made his son-in-law Viceroy of Italy; he made his brother King of Holland; he made his brother-in-law King of Naples; he imprisoned the King of Spain; he banished the Regent of Portugal, and formed his plan to take possession of the Crown of England. England had checked his designs; her trident had stirred up his empire from its foundation. He complained of her tyranny at sea; but it was her power at sea which arrested his tyranny on land,— the navy of England saved Europe. Knowing this, he knew the conquest of England became necessary for the accomplishment of the conquest of Europe, and the destruction of her marine necessary for the conquest of England. Accordingly, besides raising an army of 60,000 men for the invasion of England, he applied himself to the destruction of her commerce, the foundation of her naval power. In pursuit of this object and on his plan of a Western empire, he conceived and in part executed the design of consigning to plunder and destruction the vast regions of Russia. He quits the genial clime of the temperate zone; he bursts through the narrow limits of an immense empire; he abandons comfort and security, and he hurries to the Pole to hazard them all, and with them the companions of his victories and the fame and fruits of his crimes and his talents, on speculation of leaving in Europe, throughout the whole of its extent, no one free or independent nation. To oppose this huge conception of mischief and despotism, the great potentate of the north from his gloomy recesses advances to defend himself against the voracity of ambition, amid the sterility of his empire. Ambition is omnivorous; it feasts on famine and sheds tons of blood, that it may starve in ice in order to commit a robbery on desolation. The power of the north, I say, joins another prince, whom Bonaparte had deprived of almost the whole of his authority,— the King of Prussia; and then another potentate, whom Bonaparte had deprived of the principal part of his dominions,— the Emperor of Austria. These three powers, physical causes, final justice, the influence of your victories in Spain and Portugal, and the spirit given to Europe by the achievements and renown of your great commander [the Duke of Wellington], together with the precipitation of his own ambition, combine to accomplish his destruction; Bonaparte is conquered. He who said, «I will be like the Most High,» he who smote the nations with a continual stroke,— this short-lived son of the morning, Lucifer,— falls, and the earth is at rest; the phantom of royalty passes on to nothing, and the three kings to the gates of Paris: there they stand, the late victims of his ambition, and now the disposers of his destiny and the masters of his empire. Without provocation he had gone to their countries with fire and sword; with the greatest provocation they came to his country with life and liberty: they do an act unparalleled in the annals of history, such as nor envy, nor time, nor malice, nor prejudice, nor ingratitude can efface; they give to his subjects liberty, and to himself life and royalty. This is greater than conquest! The present race must confess their virtues, and ages to come must crown their monuments, and place them above heroes and kings in glory everlasting. . . .

Do you wish to confirm this military tyranny in the heart of Europe,—a tyranny founded on the triumph of the army over the principles of civil government, tending to universalize throughout Europe the domination of the sword,—and to reduce to paper and parchment, Magna Charta and all our civil constitutions? An experiment such as no country ever made and no good country would ever permit: to relax the moral and religious influences; to set heaven and earth adrift from one another, and make God Almighty a tolerated alien in his own creation; an insurrectionary hope to every bad man in the community, and a frightful lesson to profit and power, vested in those who have pandered their allegiance from king to emperor, and now found their pretensions to domination on the merit of breaking their oaths and deposing their sovereign. Should you do anything so monstrous as to leave your allies in order to confirm such a system; should you forget your name, forget your ancestors, and the inheritance they have left you of morality and renown; should you astonish Europe by quitting your allies to render immortal such a composition, would not the nations exclaim: "You have very providently watched over our interests, and very generously have you contributed to our service,—and do you falter now? In vain have you stopped in your own person the flying fortunes of Europe; in vain have you taken the eagle of Napoleon and snatched *invincibility* from his standard, if now, when confederated Europe is ready to march, you take the lead in the desertion and preach the penitence of Bonaparte and the poverty of England."



THOMAS GRAY.

THOMAS GRAY

(1716–1771)

BY GEORGE PARSONS LATHROP

The fame of Thomas Gray is unique among English poets, in that, although world-wide and luminous, it springs from a single poem, a flawless masterpiece,—the ‘Elegy Written in a Country Church-Yard.’ This is the one production by which he is known to the great mass of readers and will continue to be known to coming generations; yet in his own time his other poems were important factors, in establishing the high repute accorded to him then and still maintained in the esteem of critics. Nevertheless, living to be nearly fifty-five and giving himself exclusively to letters, the whole of the work that he left behind him amounted only to some fourteen hundred lines.

His value to literature and to posterity, therefore, is to be measured not by the quantity of his literary contributions or by any special variety in their scope, but by a certain wholesome and independent influence which he exerted upon the language of poetry, and by a rare quality of intense yet seemingly calm and almost repressed genius, which no one among his commentators has been able to define clearly. The most comprehensive thing ever written about him—wise, just, witty, yet sympathetic and penetrating—is the essay by James Russell Lowell in his final volume of criticism.

> «It is the rarest thing,» says Lowell, «to find genius and dilettantism united in the same person (as for a time they were in Goethe): for genius implies always a certain fanaticism of temperament, which, if sometimes it seem fitful, is yet capable of intense energy on occasion; while the main characteristic of the dilettante is that sort of impartiality which springs from inertia of mind, admirable for observation, incapable of turning it to practical account. Yet we have, I think, an example of this rare combination of qualities in Gray; and it accounts both for the kind of excellence to which he attained, and for the way in which he disappointed expectation. . . . He is especially interesting as an artist in words and phrases, a literary type far less common among writers of English than it is in France or Italy, where perhaps the traditions of Latin culture were never wholly lost. . . . When so many have written so much, we shall the more readily pardon the man who has written too little or just enough.»

He was born in London, December 26th, 1716, the son of a money scrivener who had dissipated most of his inherited property, but was skilled in music, and perhaps transmitted to the son that musical element which gives beauty and strength to his poetry. Gray's mother was a woman of character, who with his aunt set up an India warehouse and supported herself; also sending the young man to St. Peter's College, Cambridge, after his studies at Eton. Leaving college without a degree, he traveled on the Continent of Europe with Horace Walpole in 1739; then returned to Cambridge and passed the remainder of his life in the university, as a bachelor of civil law nominally,—not practicing, but devoting himself to study and to excursions through rural England. He had a profound and passionate love for nature, a kind of religious exaltation in the contemplation of it and in mountain worship, which was at variance with the prevailing eighteenth-century literary mood and prefigured the feeling of Wordsworth. His mother having retired to Stoke Poges, Buckinghamshire, he often made visits there; and the church-yard of his deathless ‹Elegy› is generally believed to be that of the parish church at Stoke Poges. It was here that he was laid to rest in the same tomb with his mother and his aunt, after his death, July 24th, 1771.

The ‹Elegy› was finished in 1749. He had begun writing it seven years before. This has sometimes been alluded to as an instance in point of Horace's advice, that a poem should be matured for seven years. The length of time given to the ‹Elegy,› however, may be accounted for partly by Gray's dilatory habits of writing, and partly by the parallel of Tennyson's long delay in perfecting the utterance of his meditations on the death of his friend Hallam through ‹In Memoriam.› Gray's dearest friend, Richard West, died in 1742; and it was apparently under the stress of that sorrow that he began the ‹Elegy,› which was completed only in 1749. Two years later it was published. It won the popular heart immediately, and passed through four editions in the first twelvemonth.

Of Gray's other poems, those which have left the deepest impression are his ‹Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College,› ‹The Progress of Poesy,› and ‹The Bard.› The last two are somewhat Pindaric in style, but also suggest the influence of the Italian canzone. In the Eton College ode, his first published piece, occurs the phrase since grown proverbial, «Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise.» It is a curious fact that while most readers know Gray only as the author of the ‹Elegy,› every one is familiar with certain lines coined by him, but unaware of their source. For instance, in ‹The Progress of Poesy,› he speaks of

«The unconquerable mind, and freedom's holy flame.»

It is in the same place that he describes Milton as «blasted with excess of light,» and in alluding to Dryden, evolves the image of

«Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn.»

His, too, in ‹The Bard,› is the now well-known line—

«Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm.»

Many of his finest expressions are in part derived from classic or other poets; but he showed undeniable genius in his adaptation, transformation, or new creation from these suggestive passages.

Gray was small and delicate in person, handsome and refined, fond of fashionable dress, and preferred to be known as a «gentleman» rather than a poet. He was very reticent, somewhat melancholy, and an invalid; a man also of vast erudition, being learned not only in literature but in botany, zoölogy, antiquities, architecture, art, history, and philosophy as well. He enjoyed the distinction of refusing the post of poet laureate, after the death of Cibber. On the other hand, he coveted the place of professor of modern literature and languages at Cambridge University, to which he was appointed in 1769; but he never performed any of the duties of his professorship beyond that of drawing the salary.

He brought forth nothing in the special kinds of knowledge which he had acquired in such large measure; and the actual ideas conveyed in his poetry were not original, but savored rather of the commonplace. Lowell says of the ‹Elegy› that it won its popularity «not through any originality of thought, but far more through originality of sound.» There must, however, be some deeper reason than this for the grasp which it has upon the minds and hearts of all classes. Two elements of power and popularity it certainly possessed in the highest degree. One is the singular simplicity of its language (a result of consummate art), which makes it understandable by everybody. The other is the depth and the sincerity of the emotion with which it imbues thoughts, sentiments, and reflections that are common to the whole of mankind. The very unproductiveness of Gray's mind in other directions probably helped this one product. The quintessence of all his learning, his perceptive faculty, and his meditations was infused into the life-blood of this immortal poem.

George Parsons Lathrop

ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCH-YARD

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day;
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea;
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds:

Save that, from yonder ivy-mantled tower,
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient, solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a moldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell forever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care;
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield;
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of Heraldry, the pomp of Power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike th' inevitable hour:
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault,
If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,

Where, through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault,
   The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
   Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honor's voice provoke the silent dust,
   Or Flattery soothe the dull, cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
   Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,
   Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
   Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll;
Chill Penury repressed their noble rage,
   And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
   The dark, unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
   And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village Hampden, that with dauntless breast
   The little tyrant of his fields withstood;
Some mute, inglorious Milton here may rest;
   Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood.

Th' applause of listening senates to command,
   The threats of Pain and Ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
   And read their history in a nation's eyes,—

Their lot forbade; nor circumscribed alone
   Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
   And shut the gates of mercy on mankind;

The struggling pangs of conscious Truth to hide,
   To quench the blushes of ingenuous Shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
   With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

[The thoughtless world to Majesty may bow,
   Exalt the brave, and idolize success;
But more to Innocence their safety owe,
   Than Power and Genius e'er conspired to bless.]

[Hark, how the sacred calm that broods around
   Bids every fierce tumultuous passion cease,

In still, small accents whispering from the ground
A grateful earnest of eternal peace.]

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learned to stray;
Along the cool, sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet even these bones from insult to protect,
Some frail memorial, still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their names, their years, spelt by th' unlettered Muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply;
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing, anxious being e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies;
Some pious drops the closing eye requires:
E'en from the tomb the voice of Nature cries;
E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee who, mindful of th' unhonored dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
If, chance, by lonely Contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say:—
«Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

«There at the foot of yonder nodding beech
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

«Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Muttering his wayward fancies, he would rove;
Now drooping, woeful-wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

«One morn I missed him on the 'customed hill,
Along the heath, and near his favorite tree:

Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
   Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood, was he:

«The next, with dirges due in sad array,
   Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne;—
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay
   Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn.»

[«There scattered oft, the earliest of the year,
   By hands unseen, are showers of violets found;
The redbreast loves to build and warble there,
   And little footsteps lightly print the ground.»]

THE EPITAPH

HERE rests his head upon the lap of Earth,
   A Youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown;
Fair Science frowned not on his humble birth,
   And Melancholy marked him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere;
   Heaven did a recompense as largely send:
He gave to Misery all he had,—a tear;
   He gained from Heaven ('twas all he wished) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
   Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose,)—
   The Bosom of his Father and his God.

[The stanzas included in brackets were omitted by Gray in the first edition of the ‹Elegy,› and as sanctioned by him or by later editors are (except as to the third one) of infrequent appearance in the poem.]

ODE ON THE SPRING

LO! WHERE the rosy-bosomed Hours,
   Fair Venus's train, appear,
Disclose the long-expecting flowers,
   And wake the purple year!
The Attic warbler pours her throat,
Responsive to the cuckoo's note,
   The untaught harmony of spring;
While, whispering pleasure as they fly,
Cool zephyrs through the clear blue sky
   Their gathered fragrance fling.

Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch
   A broader, browner shade,
Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech
   O'er-canopies the glade,
Beside some water's rushy brink
With me the Muse shall sit, and think
   (At ease reclined in rustic state)
How vain the ardor of the crowd,
How low, how little are the proud,
   How indigent the great!

Still is the toiling hand of Care;
   The panting herds repose:
Yet hark! how through the peopled air
   The busy murmur glows!
The insect-youth are on the wing,
Eager to taste the honeyed spring,
   And float amid the liquid noon;
Some lightly o'er the current skim,
Some show their gayly gilded trim
   Quick-glancing to the sun.

To Contemplation's sober eye
   Such is the race of Man;
And they that creep, and they that fly,
   Shall end where they began.
Alike the Busy and the Gay
But flutter through life's little day,
   In Fortune's varying colors drest;
Brushed by the hand of rough Mischance,
Or chilled by Age, their airy dance
   They leave, in dust to rest.

Methinks I hear, in accents low,
   The sportive kind reply:
Poor moralist! and what art thou?
   A solitary fly!
Thy joys no glittering female meets,
No hive hast thou of hoarded sweets,
   No painted plumage to display:
On hasty wings thy youth is flown;
Thy sun is set, thy spring is gone—
   We frolic while 'tis May.

ON A DISTANT PROSPECT OF ETON COLLEGE

Ye distant spires, ye antique towers,
That crown the watery glade,
Where grateful Science still adores
Her Henry's holy shade;
And ye, that from the stately brow
Of Windsor's heights th' expanse below
Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey,
Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers among
Wanders the hoary Thames along
His silver-winding way!

Ah, happy hills! ah, pleasing shade!
Ah, fields beloved in vain!
Where once my careless childhood strayed,
A stranger yet to pain!
I feel the gales that from ye blow
A momentary bliss bestow,
As waving fresh their gladsome wing,
My weary soul they seem to soothe,
And, redolent of joy and youth,
To breathe a second spring.

Say, Father Thames,—for thou hast seen
Full many a sprightly race
Disporting on thy margent green,
The paths of pleasure trace,—
Who foremost now delight to cleave
With pliant arm thy glassy wave?
The captive linnet which enthrall?
What idle progeny succeed
To chase the rolling circle's speed,
Or urge the flying ball?

While some, on earnest business bent,
Their murmuring labors ply
'Gainst graver hours that bring constraint
To sweeten liberty:
Some bold adventurers disdain
The limits of their little reign,
And unknown regions dare descry;
Still as they run they look behind,
They hear a voice in every wind,
And snatch a fearful joy.

Gay hope is theirs, by fancy fed,
Less pleasing when possest;
The tear forgot as soon as shed,
The sunshine of the breast:
Theirs buxom health, of rosy hue,
Wild wit, invention ever new,
And lively cheer, of vigor born;
The thoughtless day, the easy night,
The spirits pure, the slumbers light,
That fly th' approach of morn.

Alas! regardless of their doom,
The little victims play;
No sense have they of ills to come,
No care beyond to-day:
Yet see, how all around them wait
The ministers of human fate,
And black Misfortune's baleful train!
Ah, show them where in ambush stand,
To seize their prey, the murtherous band!
Ah! tell them they are men!

These shall the fury Passions tear,
The vultures of the mind,
Disdainful Anger, pallid Fear,
And Shame that skulks behind;
Or pining Love shall waste their youth,
Or Jealousy, with rankling tooth,
That inly gnaws the secret heart;
And Envy wan, and faded Care,
Grim-visaged comfortless Despair,
And Sorrow's piercing dart.

Ambition this shall tempt to rise,
Then whirl the wretch from high,
To bitter Scorn a sacrifice,
And grinning Infamy.
The stings of Falsehood those shall try,
And hard Unkindness's altered eye,
That mocks the tear it forced to flow;
And keen Remorse with blood defiled,
And moody Madness laughing wild
Amid severest woe.

Lo! in the vale of years beneath
A grisly troop are seen,—

The painful family of Death,
More hideous than their queen:
This racks the joints, this fires the veins,
That every laboring sinew strains,
Those in the deeper vitals rage:
Lo! Poverty, to fill the band,
That numbs the soul with icy hand,
And slow-consuming Age.

To each his sufferings: all are men,
Condemned alike to groan;
The tender for another's pain,
Th' unfeeling for his own.
Yet, ah! why should they know their fate,
Since sorrow never comes too late,
And happiness too swiftly flies?
Thought would destroy their Paradise.
No more: where ignorance is bliss,
'Tis folly to be wise.

THE BARD

A Pindaric Ode

"Ruin seize thee, ruthless King!
Confusion on thy banners wait!
Though fanned by Conquest's crimson wing,
They mock the air with idle state.
Helm, nor hauberk's twisted mail,
Nor e'en thy virtues, Tyrant, shall avail
To save thy secret soul from nightly fears,—
From Cambria's curse, from Cambria's tears!"
Such were the sounds that o'er the crested pride
Of the first Edward scattered wild dismay,
As down the steep of Snowdon's shaggy side
He wound with toilsome march his long array.
Stout Glo'ster stood aghast in speechless trance;
"To arms!" cried Mortimer, and couched his quivering lance.

On a rock, whose haughty brow
Frowns o'er cold Conway's foaming flood,
Robed in the sable garb of woe,
With haggard eyes the poet stood;
(Loose his beard, and hoary hair
Streamed, like a meteor, to the troubled air;)

And with a master's hand and prophet's fire,
Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre:
«Hark, how each giant oak, and desert cave,
Sighs to the torrent's awful voice beneath!
O'er thee, O King! their hundred arms they wave,
Revenge on thee in hoarser murmurs breathe;
Vocal no more, since Cambria's fatal day,
To high-born Hoel's harp, or soft Llewellyn's lay.

«Cold is Cadwallo's tongue,
That hushed the stormy main;
Brave Urien sleeps upon his craggy bed;
Mountains, ye mourn in vain
Modred, whose magic song
Made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-topt head.
On dreary Arvon's shore they lie,
Smeared with gore, and ghastly pale:
Far, far aloof the affrighted ravens sail;
The famished eagle screams, and passes by.
Dear lost companions of my tuneful art,
Dear as the light that visits these sad eyes,
Dear as the ruddy drops that warm my heart,
Ye died amidst your dying country's cries.
No more I weep: they do not sleep;
On yonder cliffs, a grisly band,
I see them sit; they linger yet,
Avengers of their native land;
With me in dreadful harmony they join,
And weave with bloody hands the tissue of thy line.

«Weave the warp, and weave the woof,
The winding-sheet of Edward's race;
Give ample room, and verge enough,
The characters of hell to trace;
Mark the year, and mark the night,
When Severn shall re-echo with affright
The shrieks of death, through Berkley's roof that ring,
Shrieks of an agonizing King!
She-wolf of France, with unrelenting fangs,
That tear'st the bowels of thy mangled mate,
From thee be born, who o'er thy country hangs
The scourge of Heaven. What terrors round him wait!
Amazement in his van, with Flight combined,
And Sorrow's faded form, and Solitude behind.

"Mighty victor, mighty lord!
Low on his funeral couch he lies!
No pitying heart, no eye, afford
A tear to grace his obsequies.
Is the sable warrior fled?
Thy son is gone. He rests among the dead.
The swarm, that in thy noontide beam were born?
Gone to salute the rising morn.
Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows,
While proudly riding o'er the azure realm
In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes:
Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm;
Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,
That, hushed in grim repose, expects his evening prey.

"Fill high the sparkling bowl!
The rich repast prepare!
Reft of a crown, he yet may share the feast:
Close by the regal chair
Fell Thirst and Famine scowl
A baleful smile upon their baffled guest.
Heard ye the din of battle bray,
Lance to lance, and horse to horse?
Long years of havoc urge their destined course,
And through the kindred squadrons mow their way.
Ye towers of Julius, London's lasting shame,
With many a foul and midnight murder fed,
Revere his consort's faith, his father's fame,
And spare the meek usurper's holy head.
Above, below, the rose of snow,
Twined with her blushing foe, we spread:
The bristled boar in infant-gore
Wallows beneath the thorny shade.
Now, brothers, bending o'er the accursed loom,
Stamp we our vengeance deep, and ratify his doom.

"Edward, lo! to sudden fate
(Weave we the woof. The thread is spun.)
Half of thy heart we consecrate.
(The web is wove. The work is done.)
Stay, oh stay! nor thus forlorn
Leave me unblessed, unpitied, here to mourn:
In yon bright track that fires the western skies,
They melt, they vanish from my eyes.

But oh! what solemn scenes on Snowdon's height
Descending slow their glittering skirts unroll?
Visions of glory, spare my aching sight!
Ye unborn ages, crowd not on my soul!
No more our long-lost Arthur we bewail.
All hail, ye genuine kings, Britannia's issue, hail!

«Girt with many a baron bold,
Sublime their starry fronts they rear;
And gorgeous dames and statesmen old
In bearded majesty appear.
In the midst a form divine!
Her eye proclaims her of the Briton line;
Her lion port, her awe-commanding face,
Attempered sweet to virgin grace.
What strings symphonious tremble in the air;
What strains of vocal transport round her play!
Hear from the grave, great Taliessin, hear!
They breathe a soul to animate thy clay.
Bright Rapture calls, and soaring as she sings,
Waves in the eye of heaven her many-colored wings.

«The verse adorn again
Fierce war, and faithful love,
And truth severe, by fairy fiction drest.
In buskined measures move
Pale Grief, and pleasing Pain,
With Horror, tyrant of the throbbing breast.
A voice, as of the cherub choir,
Gales from blooming Eden bear;
And distant warblings lessen on my ear,
That lost in long futurity expire.
Fond impious man, thinkest thou yon sanguine cloud,
Raised by thy breath, has quenched the orb of day?
To-morrow he repairs the golden flood,
And warms the nations with redoubled ray.
Enough for me; with joy I see
The different doom our fates assign;
Be thine despair, and sceptred care;
To triumph and to die are mine.»
He spoke, and headlong from the mountain's height
Deep in the roaring tide he plunged to endless night.

THE GREEK ANTHOLOGY

BY TALCOTT WILLIAMS

The greater monuments of Greece all men know, the incomparable peaks of the chain; and the chain lasted seventeen hundred years, nor ever sank to the dead level about. The steadfast sight of these great Greek originals warps and dwarfs our conception of Greek life. We behold the Parthenon; we forget that each village shrine had its sense of proportion and subtle curve. The Venus of Melos we remember, and the Victory is poised forever on its cliff; but Tanagra figurines tell as much, and reveal more, of Greek life. Nor is it otherwise in letters. The great names all know. For a brief span they stood close together, and the father who heard Æschylus might have told his experience to his long-lived son who read Aristotle, while between the two stood all the greatest genius that makes Greece Greek,—save only Homer. So brief was the noonday,—and it is at high noon, and high noon only, that men have agreed to take the sun; but this uplift was gained in the ascent of nigh two hundred years from the first written Greek literature that still lives. The descent, to the last of the Greek verse which still remained poetry, ran through thirteen centuries. Over all this prodigious span of fifteen hundred years stretches the Greek Anthology, a collection of 4,063 short Greek poems, two to eight lines long for the most part, collected and re-collected through more than a thousand years. The first of these poets, Mimnermus, was the contemporary of Jeremiah, and dwelt in cities that shuddered over tidings of Babylonian invasion. The last, Cometas, was the contemporary of Edward the Confessor, and dreaded Seljuk and Turk.

As the epic impulse faded, and before Greek genius for tragedy rose, the same race and dialect which had given epic narrative the proud, full verse that filled like a sail to zephyr and to storm alike, devised the elegiac couplet. With its opening even flow, its swifter rush in the second line, and its abrupt pause, it was a medium in which not narrative but man spoke, whether personal in passion, or impersonal in the dedication of a statue, or in epitaph. This verse had conventions as rigorous and restrained as the sonnet, and was briefer. It served as well for the epitaph of Thermopylæ as for the cradle-bier of a child, dead new-born; and lent itself as gracefully to the gift of a bunch of roses as it swelled with some sonorous blast of patriotism. It could sharpen to a gibe, or sink to a wail at untoward fate. Through a period twice as long as the life of English letters, these short poems set forth the vision of life, the ways and works of men, the love and death of mortals. These lines of weight, of moment, always of grace and often of inspiration, stood on milestones; they graced the base of statues; they were inscribed on tombs; they stood over doorways; they were painted on vases. The rustic shrines held them, and on the front of the great temple they were borne. In this form, friend wrote to friend and lover to lover. Four or five of the best express the emotion of the passing Greek traveler at the statue of Memnon on the Nile. The quality of verse that fills the inn album to-day we all know; but Greek life was so compact of form and thought that even this unknown traveler's verse, scrawled with a stylus, still thrills, still rings, as the statue still sounds its ancient note.

In this long succession of short poems is delineated the Greek character, not of Athens but of the whole circle of the Mediterranean. The sphered life of the race is in its subjects. Each great Greek victory has its epigrams. In them, statues have an immortal life denied to marble and to bronze. The critical admiration of the Hellene for his great men of letters stands recorded here; his early love for the heroes of his brief-lived freedom, and his sedulous flattery of the Roman lords of his slavery. Here too is his domestic life, its joy and its sorrow. In this epigram, the maid dedicates her dolls to Artemis; and in that, the mother, mother and priestess both, lays down a life overflowing in good deeds and fruited with honorable offspring. The splendid side of Greek life is painted elsewhere. Here is its homely simplicity. The fisher again spreads his nets and the sailor his peaked lateen sail. The hunter sets his snares and tracks his game in the light snow. The caged partridge stretches its weary wings in its cage, and the cat has for it a modern appetite. Men gibe and jest. They see how hollow life is, and also how truth rings true. Love is here, sacred and revered, in forms pure and holy; and not less, that foul pool decked with beauty in which Greek manhood lost its masculine virtue.

Half a century before Christ, when Greek life overspread the eastern Mediterranean, and in every market-place Greek was the tongue of trade, of learning, and of gentle breeding, Greek letters grew conscious of its own riches. For six centuries and more, or as long as separates us from Chaucer, men had been writing these brief epigrams. The first had the brevity of Simonides, the next Alexandrian luxuriance. Many were carved by those who wrote much; more by those who composed but two or three. In Syrian Gadara there dwelt a Greek, Meleager, whose poetry is the very flower of fervent Greek verse. Yet so near did he live to the great change which was to overturn the gods he loved, and substitute morality for beauty as the mainspring of life, that some who knew him must also, a brief span of years later, have known Jesus the Christ. Meleager was the first who gathered Greek epigrams in an Anthology, prefacing it with such apt critical utterance as has been the despair of all critics called since to weigh verse in ruder scales and with a poise less perfect. He had the wide round of the best of Greek to pick from, and he chose with unerring taste. To his collection Philippus of Thessalonica, working when Paul was preaching in Jason's house, added the work of the Roman period, the fourth development of the epigram. Other collections between have perished, one in the third or Byzantine period, in which this verse had a renaissance under Justinian. In the tenth century a Byzantine scholar, Constantinos Cephalas, rearranged his predecessors' collections,—Meleager's included,—and brought together the largest number which has come down to us. The collection is known to-day as the 'Palatine Anthology,' from the library which long owned it. His work was in the last flare of life in the Lower Empire, when Greek heroism, for the last time, stemmed the Moslem tide and gave Eastern Europe breathing-space. When his successor Maximus Planudes, of the century of Petrarch,—monk, diplomat, theologian, and phrase-maker,—addressed himself to the last collection made, the shadow of new Italy lay over Greek life, and the Galilean had recast the minds of men. He excluded much that Greeks, from Meleager to Cephalas, had freely admitted, and which modern lovers of the Anthology would be willing to see left out of all copies but their own. The collection of Planudes long remained alone known (first edition Florence, 1594). That of Cephalas survived in a single manuscript of varied fortune, seen in 1606 by Salmasius at eighteen,—happy boy, and happy manuscript!—lost to learning for a century and a half in the Vatican, published by Brunck, 1776, and finally edited by Frederic Jacobs, 1794–1803, five volumes of text and three of comment, usually bound in eight. The text has been republished by Tauchnitz, and the whole work has its most convenient and familiar form for scholars in the edition of both the collections of Planudes and Cephalas, with epigrams from all other sources prepared by Frederic Dübner for Didot's 'Bibliotheca Scriptorum Græcorum,' 1864–1872, three volumes. The Anthology as a whole has no adequate English translation. About one-third of the poems have a prose translation by George Burges in the 'Greek Anthology,' 1832, of Bohn's series, with versions in verse by many hands.

The first English translation of selections appeared anonymously, 1791. Others have succeeded: Robert Bland and John Herman

Merivale, 1806; Robert Bland, 1813; Richard Garnett, 1864; Sir Edwin Arnold, 1869; John Addington Symonds, 1873; J. W. Mackail, 1890; Lilla Cabot Perry, 1891. A collection of selected translations edited by Graham R. Tomson was published in 1889. Of these partial versions, the only one which approaches the incommunicable charm of the original is Mr. Mackail's, an incomparable translation. His versions are freely used in the selections which follow. All the metrical versions, except those by Mrs. Perry, are from Miss Tomson's collection. But no translation equals the sanity, the brevity, the clarity of the Greek original, qualities which have made these epigrams consummate models of style to the modern world. In all the round of literature, the only exact analogue of the Greek epigram is the Japanese «ode,» with its thirty syllables, its single idea, and its constant use of all classes as an universal medium of familiar poetic expression. Of like nature, used alike for epigraph, epitaph, and familiar personal expression, is the rhymed Arabic Makotta, brief poems written in one form for eighteen hundred years, and still written.

Talcott Williams

ON THE ATHENIAN DEAD AT PLATÆA

Simonides (556–467 B. C.)

If to die nobly is the chief part of excellence, to us out of all men Fortune gave this lot; for hastening to set a crown of freedom on Greece, we lie possessed of praise that grows not old.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

ON THE LACEDÆMONIAN DEAD AT PLATÆA

Simonides

These men, having set a crown of imperishable glory on their own land, were folded in the dark clouds of death; yet being dead they have not died, since from on high their excellence raises them gloriously out of the house of Hades.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

ON A SLEEPING SATYR

Plato (429–347 B. C.)

This satyr Diodorus engraved not, but laid to rest; your touch will wake him; the silver is asleep.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

A POET'S EPITAPH

Simmias of Thebes (405 B. C.)

Quietly, o'er the tomb of Sophocles,
Quietly, ivy, creep with tendrils green;
And roses, ope your petals everywhere,
While dewy shoots of grape-vine peep between,
Upon the wise and honeyed poet's grave,
Whom Muse and Grace their richest treasures gave.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

WORSHIP IN SPRING

Theætetus (Fourth Century B. C.)

Now at her fruitful birth-tide the fair green field flowers out in blowing roses; now on the boughs of the colonnaded cypresses the cicala, mad with music, lulls the binder of sheaves; and the careful mother swallow, having finished houses under the eaves, gives harborage to her brood in the mud-plastered cells; and the sea slumbers, with zephyr-wooing calm spread clear over the broad ship-tracks, not breaking in squalls on the sternposts, not vomiting foam upon the beaches. O sailor, burn by the altars the glittering round of a mullet, or a cuttle-fish, or a vocal scarus, to Priapus, ruler of ocean and giver of anchorage; and so go fearlessly on thy seafaring to the bounds of the Ionian Sea.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

SPRING ON THE COAST

Leonidas of Tarentum (Third Century B. C.)

Now is the season of sailing; for already the chattering swallow is come, and the gracious west wind; the meadows flower, and the sea, tossed up with waves and rough blasts, has sunk to silence. Weigh thine anchors and unloose thine hawsers, O mariner, and sail with all thy canvas set: this I, Priapus of the harbor, bid thee, O man, that thou mayest set forth to all thy trafficking.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

A YOUNG HERO'S EPITAPH.

Dioscorides (Third Century B. C.)

Home to Petana comes Thrasybulus lifeless on his shield, seven Argive wounds before. His bleeding boy the father Tynnichos lays on the pyre, to say:—"Let your wounds weep. Tearless I bury you, my boy—mine and my country's."

Translation of Talcott Williams.

LOVE

Posidippus (Third Century B. C.)

Jar of Athens, drip the dewy juice of wine, drip, let the feast to which all bring their share be wetted as with dew; be silenced the swan-sage Zeno, and the Muse of Cleanthes, and let bitter-sweet Love be our concern.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

SORROW'S BARREN GRAVE

Heracleitus (Third Century B. C.)

Keep off, keep off thy hand, O husbandman,
Nor through this grave's calm dust thy plowshare drive;
These very sods have once been mourned upon,
And on such ground no crop will ever thrive,
Nor corn spring up with green and feathery ears,
From earth that has been watered by such tears.

Translation of Alma Strettell.

TO A COY MAIDEN

ASCLEPIADES (286 B. C.)

Believe me love, it is not good
To hoard a mortal maidenhood;
In Hades thou wilt never find,
Maiden, a lover to thy mind;
Love's for the living! presently
Ashes and dust in death are we!

Translation of Andrew Lang.

THE EMPTIED QUIVER

MNESALCUS (Second Century B. C.)

This bending bow and emptied quiver, Promachus hangs as a gift to thee, Phœbus. The swift shafts men's hearts hold, whom they called to death in the battle's rout.

Translation of Talcott Williams.

THE TALE OF TROY

ALPHEUS (First Century B. C.)

Still we hear the wail of Andromache, still we see all Troy toppling from her foundations, and the battling Ajax, and Hector, bound to the horses, dragged under the city's crown of towers,—through the Muse of Mæonides, the poet with whom no one country adorns herself as her own, but the zones of both worlds.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

HEAVEN HATH ITS STARS

MARCUS ARGENTARIUS (First Century B. C.)

Feasting, I watch with westward-looking eye
The flashing constellations' pageantry,
Solemn and splendid; then anon I wreathe
My hair, and warbling to my harp I breathe
My full heart forth, and know the heavens look down
Pleased, for they also have their Lyre and Crown.

Translation of Richard Garnett.

PAN OF THE SEA-CLIFF

ARCHIAS (First Century B. C.)

ME, PAN, the fishermen placed upon this holy cliff,— Pan of the sea-shore, the watcher here over the fair anchorages of the harbor: and I take care now of the baskets and again of the trawlers off this shore. But sail thou by, O stranger, and in requital of this good service of theirs I will send behind thee a gentle south wind.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

ANACREON'S GRAVE

ANTIPATER OF SIDON (First Century B. C.)

O STRANGER who passeth by the humble tomb of Anacreon, if thou hast had aught of good from my books, pour libation on my ashes, pour libation of the jocund grape, that my bones may rejoice, wetted with wine; so I, who was ever deep in the wine-steeped revels of Dionysus, I who was bred among drinking-tunes, shall not even when dead endure without Bacchus this place to which the generation of mortals must come.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

REST AT NOON

MELEAGER (First Century B. C.)

VOICEFUL cricket, drunken with drops of dew, thou playest thy rustic music that murmurs in the solitude, and perched on the leaf edges shrillest thy lyre-tune with serrated legs and swart skin. But, my dear, utter a new song for the tree-nymphs' delight, and make thy harp-notes echo to Pan's, that escaping Love I may seek out sleep at noon, here, lying under the shady plane.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

«IN THE SPRING A YOUNG MAN'S FANCY»

MELEAGER

Now the white iris blossoms, and the rain-loving narcissus,
And now again the lily, the mountain-roaming, blows.
Now too, the flower of lovers, the crown of all the springtime,
Zenophila the winsome, doth blossom with the rose.
O meadows, wherefore vainly in your radiant garlands laugh ye?
Since fairer is the maiden than any flower that grows!

Translation of Alma Strettell.

MELEAGER'S OWN EPITAPH

MELEAGER

Tread softly, O stranger; for here an old man sleeps among the holy dead, lulled in the slumber due to all; Meleager son of Eucrates, who united Love of the sweet tears and the Muses with the joyous Graces; whom god-begotten Tyre brought to manhood, and the sacred land of Gadara, but lovely Cos nursed in old age among the Meropes. But if thou art a Syrian, say «Salam,» and if a Phœnician, «Naidios,» and if a Greek, «Hail»: they are the same.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

EPILOGUE

PHILODEMUS (60 B. C.)

I was in love once; who has not been? I have reveled; who is uninitiated in revels? Nay, I was mad; at whose prompting but a god's? Let them go; for now the silver hair is fast replacing the black, a messenger of wisdom that comes with age. We too played when the time of playing was; and now that it is no longer, we will turn to worthier thoughts.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

DOCTOR AND DIVINITY

NICARCHUS

Marcus the doctor called yesterday on the marble Zeus; though marble, and though Zeus, his funeral is to-day.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

LOVE'S IMMORTALITY

STRATO (First Century A. D.)

WHO may know if a loved one passes the prime, while ever with him and never left alone? Who may not satisfy to-day who satisfied yesterday? and if he satisfy, what should befall him not to satisfy to-morrow?

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

AS THE FLOWERS OF THE FIELD

STRATO

IF THOU boast in thy beauty, know that the rose too blooms, but quickly being withered, is cast on the dunghill; for blossom and beauty have the same time allotted to them, and both together envious time withers away.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

SUMMER SAILING

ANTIPHILUS (First Century A. D.)

MINE be a mattress on the poop, and the awnings over it, sounding with the blows of the spray, and the fire forcing its way out of the hearthstones, and a pot upon them with empty turmoil of bubbles; and let me see the boy dressing the meat, and my table be a ship's plank covered with a cloth; and a game of pitch-and-toss, and the boatswain's whistle: the other day I had such fortune, for I love common life.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

THE GREAT MYSTERIES

CRINAGORAS (First Century A. D.)

THOUGH thy life be fixed in one seat, and thou sailest not the sea nor treadest the roads on dry land, yet by all means go to Attica, that thou mayest see those great nights of the worship of Demeter; whereby thou shalt possess thy soul without care among the living, and lighter when thou must go to the place that awaiteth all.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

TO PRIAPUS OF THE SHORE

Mæcius (Roman period)

Priapus of the sea-shore, the trawlers lay before thee these gifts by the grace of thine aid from the promontory, having imprisoned a tunny shoal in their nets of spun hemp in the green sea entrances: a beechen cup, and a rude stool of heath, and a glass cup holding wine, that thou mayest rest thy foot, weary and cramped with dancing, while thou chasest away the dry thirst.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

THE COMMON LOT

Ammianus (Second Century A. D.)

Though thou pass beyond thy landmarks even to the pillars of Heracles, the share of earth that is equal to all men awaits thee, and thou shalt lie even as Irus, having nothing more than thine obelus moldering into a land that at last is not thine.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

«TO-MORROW, AND TO-MORROW»

Macedonius (Third Century A. D.)

«To-morrow I will look on thee,»—but that never comes for us, while the accustomed putting-off ever grows and grows. This is all thy grace to my longing; and to others thou bearest other gifts, despising my faithful service. «I will see thee at evening.» And what is the evening of a woman's life?—old age, full of a million wrinkles.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

THE PALACE GARDEN

Arabius (527–567 A. D.)

I am filled with waters, and gardens, and groves, and vineyards, and the joyousness of the bordering sea; and fisherman and farmer from different sides stretch forth to me the pleasant gifts of sea and land: and them who abide in me, either a bird singing or the sweet cry of the ferrymen lulls to rest.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

THE YOUNG WIFE

JULIANUS ÆGYPTIUS (532 A. D.)

IN SEASON the bride-chamber held thee, out of season the grave took thee, O Anastasia, flower of the blithe Graces: for thee a father, for thee a husband pours bitter tears; for thee haply even the ferryman of the dead weeps; for not a whole year didst thou accomplish beside thine husband, but at sixteen years old, alas! the tomb holds thee.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

A NAMELESS GRAVE

PAULUS SILENTIARIUS

MY NAME, my country, what are they to thee?
What, whether proud or bare my pedigree?
Perhaps I far surpassed all other men;
Perhaps I fell below them all. What then?
Suffice it, stranger, that thou seest a tomb.
Thou knowest its use. It hides—no matter whom.

Translation of William Cowper.

RESIGNATION

JOANNES BARBUCALLUS (Sixth Century A. D.)

GAZING upon my husband as my last thread was spun, I praised the gods of death, and I praised the gods of marriage,—those, that I left my husband alive, and these, that he was even such an one; but may he remain, a father for our children.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

THE HOUSE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

MACEDONIUS (Sixth Century A. D.)

RIGHTEOUSNESS has raised this house from the first foundation even to the lofty roof; for Macedonius fashioned not his wealth by heaping up from the possessions of others with plundering sword, nor has any poor man here wept over his vain and profitless toil, being robbed of his most just hire; and as rest from labor is kept inviolate by the just man, so let the works of pious mortals endure.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

LOVE'S FERRIAGE

AGATHIAS (527–565 A. D.)

SINCE she was watched and could not kiss me closely,
Divine Rhodanthe cast her maiden zone
From off her waist, and holding it thus loosely
By the one end, she put a kiss thereon;
Then I — Love's stream as through a channel taking —
My lips upon the other end did press
And drew the kisses in, while ceaseless making,
Thus from afar, reply to her caress.
So the sweet girdle did beguile our pain,
Being a ferry for our kisses twain.

Translation of Alma Strettell.

[The following are undetermined in date.]

ON A FOWLER

ISIDORUS

WITH reeds and bird-lime from the desert air
Eumelus gather'd free though scanty fare.
No lordly patron's hand he deign'd to kiss,
Nor luxury knew, save liberty, nor bliss.
Thrice thirty years he lived, and to his heirs
His reeds bequeathed, his bird-lime, and his snares.

Translation of William Cowper.

YOUTH AND RICHES

ANONYMOUS

I WAS young, but poor; now in old age I am rich: alas, alone of all men pitiable in both, who then could enjoy when I had nothing, and now have when I cannot enjoy.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

THE SINGING REED

ANONYMOUS

I THE reed was a useless plant; for out of me grow not figs, nor apple, nor grape cluster: but man consecrated me a daughter of Helicon, piercing my delicate lips and making me the channel of a narrow stream; and thenceforth whenever I sip black drink, like one inspired I speak all words with this voiceless mouth.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

FIRST LOVE AGAIN REMEMBERED

ANONYMOUS

WHILE yet the grapes were green thou didst refuse me;
When they were ripe, didst proudly pass me by:
But do not grudge me still a single cluster,
Now that the grapes are withering and dry.

Translation of Alma Strettell.

SLAVE AND PHILOSOPHER

ANONYMOUS

I EPICTETUS was a slave while here,
Deformed in body, and like Irus poor,
Yet to the gods immortal I was dear.

Translation of Lilla Cabot Perry, by permission of the American Publishers' Corporation.

GOOD-BY TO CHILDHOOD

ANONYMOUS

HER tambourines and pretty ball, and the net that confined her hair, and her dolls and dolls' dresses, Timareta dedicates before her marriage to Artemis of Limnæ,—a maiden to a maiden, as is fit; do thou, daughter of Leto, laying thine hand over the girl Timareta, preserve her purely in her purity.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

WISHING

ANONYMOUS

It's oh! to be a wild wind, when my lady's in the sun:
She'd just unbind her neckerchief, and take me breathing in.

It's oh! to be a red rose, just a faintly blushing one,
So she'd pull me with her hand, and to her snowy breast I'd win.

Translation of William M. Hardinge.

HOPE AND EXPERIENCE

ANONYMOUS

Whoso has married once and seeks a second wedding, is a shipwrecked man who sails twice through a difficult gulf.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

THE SERVICE OF GOD

ANONYMOUS

Me, Chelidon, priestess of Zeus, who knew well in old age how to make offering on the altars of the immortals, happy in my children, free from grief, the tomb holds; for with no shadow in their eyes the gods saw my piety.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

THE PURE IN HEART

ANONYMOUS

He who enters the incense-filled temple must be holy; and holiness is to have a pure mind.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

THE WATER OF PURITY

Anonymous

Hallowed in soul, O stranger, come even into the precinct of a pure god, touching thyself with the virgin water: for the good a few drops are set; but a wicked man the whole ocean cannot wash in its waters.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

ROSE AND THORN

Anonymous

The rose is at her prime a little while; which once past, thou wilt find when thou seekest, no rose, but a thorn.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

A LIFE'S WANDERING

Anonymous

Know ye the flowery fields of the Cappadocian nation? Thence I was born of good parents: since I left them I have wandered to the sunset and the dawn; my name was Glaphyrus, and like my mind. I lived out my sixtieth year in perfect freedom; I know both the favor of fortune and the bitterness of life.

Translation of J. W. Mackail.

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